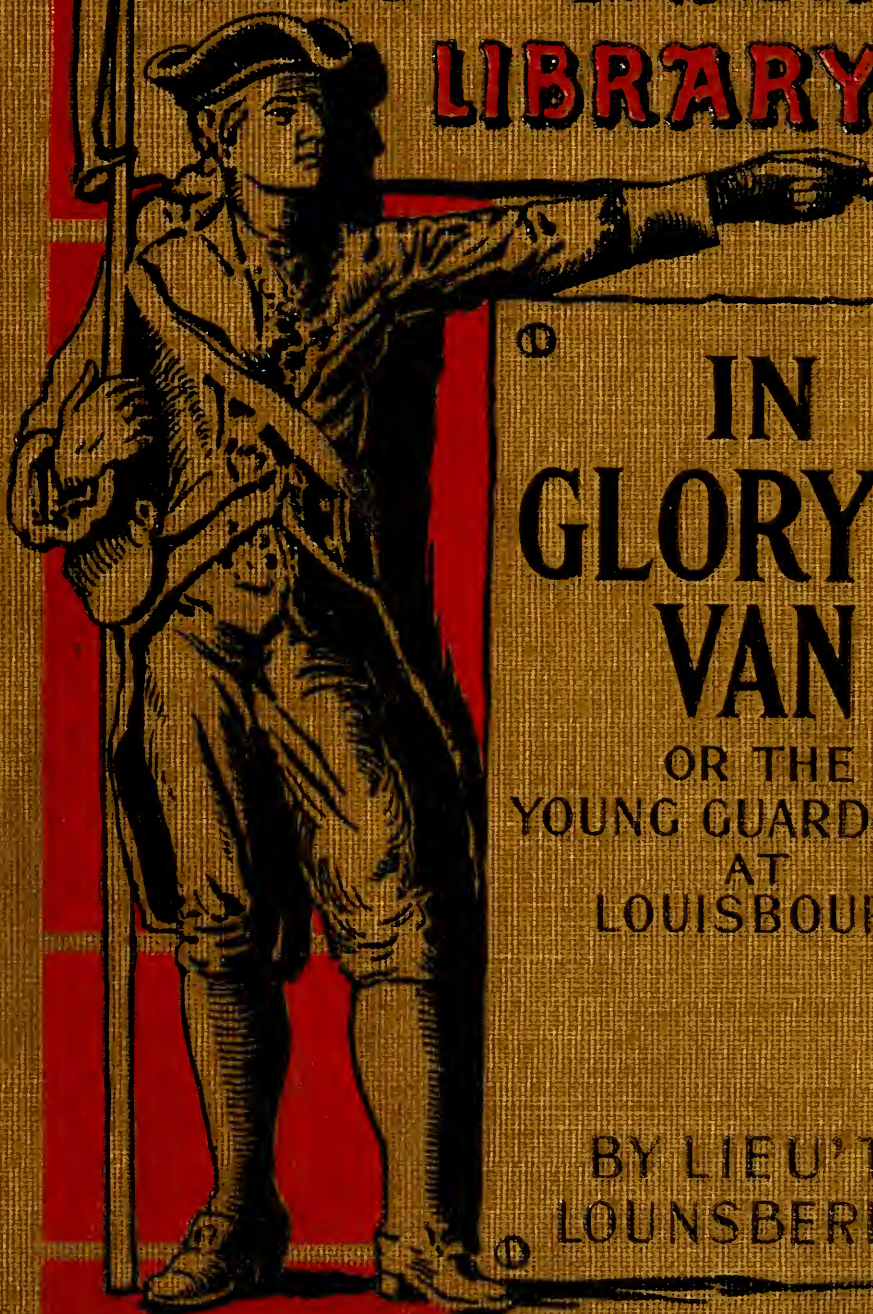


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IN GLORY'S VAN

OR THE
YOUNG GUARDSMAN
AT
LOUISBOURG

BY LIEU'T.
LOUNSBERRY

"GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH"

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“ Chip struck out viciously, but instead of his hand at Ned’s throat the fingers of the young guardsman had found his.”

(See page 34)

IN GLORY'S VAN

OR

THE YOUNG GUARDSMAN AT LOUISBOURG

BY

LIEUT. LIONEL LOUNSBERRY

AUTHOR OF

"A Call to Duty," "Out with Commodore Decatur," "Won at
West Point," "Cadet Kit Carey," "Fighting
for Freedom," etc.



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In Glory's Van

IN GLORY'S VAN.

CHAPTER I.

CAPTIVES OF THE FORTRESS.

"No enemy in sight yet, captain."

"Not yet, sir?"

"After all, it may be a rumor. We are well fixed here and can bid defiance to any force they may bring against us."

"I think so. From day to day we have heard this talk of invasion, but for the life of me, I cannot trace the reports to any authentic source. They come like the winds and go like the same."

"That's it—ha! ha!" and the speaker, a handsome French officer, standing on the walls of the fortress of Louisbourg, with three thousand miles of sea before him, swept the expanse with his glasses and laughed again.

Drucour, the commandant of this, the strongest fortress in America at the time, might well feel secure.

Since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle great sums of money had been spent upon the fort which faced the

roaring sea from the mainland of Cape Breton, and it had been pronounced impregnable by military experts.

Rumor had it that the English were coming to take it, that Admiral Boscawen had sailed with a fleet of war ships and transports carrying thousands of King George's trained soldiers, to say nothing of the hardy heroes of his American provinces, all of whom would be under command of the veteran Amherst; but as days had passed without the white sails of the hostile fleet being seen at sea, the French had begun to discredit the story.

"How come on our fair prisoners, master?" asked the young captain, who stood at Drucour's side on the king's bastion.

"Oh! they have become quite reconciled to their situation," was the reply. "They are both pretty girls, though the one called Joanna, who is the child of one Straight Tongue, a famous scout and hunter in the province, is a strange piece of flesh. She can shoot as well as my best soldiers, and, by my soul! I would not like to meet her in battle."

"You are right; I——"

"What! you haven't been making love to Joanna?" interrupted the commandant.

"No; just flirting with her."

"I must say, Contracour, that even that is dangerous."

"Yes; there are claws beneath her velvet. I know

that. The other one, Mademoiselle Randolph, is more *distingue*, and would make a wife fit for a king."

"Say you so, comrade?" and Drucour turned upon his companion and looked fixedly at him for a moment. "She is quite lovely and spirited besides. They address her as 'mistress' in English."

"Yes; she corrected me the other day in this regard. She said, that while French sounded well, she preferred the language of her people, and wanted me to speak in her own tongue."

"Just like her. The young ladies do not seem to take their captivity to heart much of late, for I fancy they have heard these persistent roundabout stories of the expedition against us, and are living in hopes."

"Doubtless," said Drucour's companion, who was a youth of not over nineteen and a member of one of the first families of France.

"I think the young ladies had a narrow escape," continued the commander of Louisbourg. "They fell into the hands of Red Fox, you know, and he likes nothing English since his friends were killed at the battle of the Monongahela, where that young Virginian, Col. Washington, rallied the British troops and saved the whole army. But for once Red Fox was merciful, and his fair prisoners, instead of being killed, were brought hither to us."

"It was indeed fortunate for them. So you think that we shall not see the sails of the enemy?"

"I consider it quite unlikely," was the reply. "Day after day I have stood on this bastion and swept the sea with my glass, but not a sail can I make out."

"I would not regret if the rumor should turn into fact."

"Nor I, captain. I want to show these English that we can drive back any armament they may send against us. Our troops are full of *elan* and our red allies eager to take a few more British scalps. The scalp business has been dull of late, and Red Fox, who is near at hand, is dying of *ennui*."

Just then over the roar of the sea that broke almost at their feet the two officers heard voices, and looking down from the bastion, saw two young girls watching them.

"The fair captives now!" cried Contracour.

"Upon my heart, you are right," and Drucour touched his hat to the young girls who had been prisoners at Louisbourg for some weeks. "Would you like to look upon the sea, ladies?"

"Nothing would suit us better," replied one of the pair. "But we do not know just how to get upon the bastion."

Contracour ran forward and sprang to the ground.

Gallantly taking the arms of Amy Randolph, he led her forward to a little offset in the ramparts where a ladder stood. He handed her up to Drucour and then turned to perform the same act for Straight Tongue's

daughter, when that person sprang past him and was on top of the bastion before he could extend a hand.

"Quicker than a cat!" cried Contracour, gazing with some amazement at Joanna. "Why, she can outrun a deer, I'll wager my head."

By this time the two fair prisoners of the fortress were at Drucour's side, looking out upon the wide expanse of water.

The French commandant pointed out the points of the cape in sight and then, waving his hand toward the unbroken sea, said:

"Three thousand miles of water stretch away yonder. You look upon the vast sea, Mistress Randolph."

"It is grand," said the fair girl. "There is always something so thrilling about the sea with its waves and its ceaseless roarings; but I prefer the forests."

"It is because you have been raised afar from the coast," was the answer.

"Perhaps. Do you know that the woods of Virginia at this time of year are carpeted with flowers, while here nothing seems to grow upon these rocks—nothing but cannon," and Amy smiled.

"Ho! ho! Look yonder, Amy," suddenly cried Joanna. "Is that not a great white bird flying out yonder?"

Drucour turned with a sudden start and lifted his sea glass to his eye.

"I see another and still another," continued Joanna.

"The devil!" said Capt. Contracour, between his teeth. "What if that confounded girl has seen the English?"

Then he fell to watching his commander closely, for Drucour was silent as he trained his glasses seaward, and the breakers at their feet roared like unbroken peals of thunder.

"What has Joanna seen?" asked Amy. "Her eyes are the keenest I ever saw, and——"

A dark cloud came over the face of Drucour.

"Look! can't you see them, Amy?" cried the darker-faced girl. "I see many great white birds out yonder against the sky line."

Amy shaded her eyes from the glare of the sea, and looked in the direction indicated by Straight Tongue's child.

"I certainly see something white out there, Joanna," she said. "It may be a fleet of clouds——"

"Or a fleet of ships," broke in Joanna. "What if it were our friends, the English?" and the half-breed girl clapped her hands.

Drucour had turned, and was looking at Contracour.

There was a silent language in his eyes which the other immediately translated, for he turned and walked down the bastion.

"Send the flag to the highest peak," said Drucour.

"It shall be done."

"And marshal the King's Own on the parade ground."

In another moment Contracour had sprung to the ground, for he was as nimble as a cat, and was running toward the flagstaff.

"Are they not vessels out yonder?" asked Amy.

Drucour handed her his glasses, which she placed to her eyes.

"I see a fleet of white sails," she said, as she gazed. "I see many large ships out there."

"Mistress Randolph is right. They have come at last!"

Amy lowered the glasses and looked at the handsome commander of the fortress.

"Our people, you mean?"

"The English!"

Joanna clapped her brown hands again and laughed for joy.

"I knew they would come!" cried she. "They have come to take the fort and rescue us!"

"Your friend is sanguine, I see," said Drucour, with a smile, as he looked at Amy. "There may be many a slip between cup and lip for her friends before they are in Louisbourg."

"But they will take it," and Joanna fairly danced in her glee. "Monsieur Drucour does not know the English. They are strong in battle, and my father is with them."

"Just as if your father is a host in himself," laughed the Frenchman.

By this time Amy had handed the glass back to its owner, who again adjusted it to his eyes and was gazing seaward.

Joanna wound one of her arms around her fair companion's waist and pointed toward the white sails that flecked the ocean far away.

"They must be with the fleet—George and Frank," she said, in low tones.

"Yes; they will certainly come if they think we are here prisoners," was the reply.

"Which they must know if they have been found by Surefoot, whom we sent for aid."

"Surefoot will find them if Red Fox did not overtake him somewhere in the great woods between here and our friends. Ah! Joanna, it is a relief to think that at last the English have come."

"We will descend, young ladies," spoke Drucour at this juncture, as he turned upon them. "Since our friends the English have deigned to pay us a visit, we must get ready with our compliments."

There was a tinge of sarcasm in the commandant's tone, but he said no more, as he gallantly assisted the two girls to descend from the king's bastion.

In a few moments the great wall of the fort was lined with officers and men.

All looked seaward, some with glasses, others with unaided eyes, but all in a thrill of excitement.

The long-rumored foe had come.

Old Louisbourg was on the eve of the greatest siege of its history, and France and England were to grapple once more in North America.

The men on the ramparts were excited. Indians mingled with the soldiers, but for the most part the braves were quiet and gazed in silence upon the great ships that momentarily grew larger as they rode the boisterous waves.

As for Amy and Joanna, they stood together for some time, and watched the men on the ramparts.

What their thoughts were the reader may imagine, for they had been four months cooped up in the fortress, having fallen into the hands of a party of Indians while traveling through the forests of Northern New York with a small escort.

The journey to Louisbourg had been uneventful, though tiresome. Red Fox and his band had watched them with care, and every attempt at escape had been frustrated.

Once within the strong walls of the northern fortress they for a time had given up all hopes of release, for, while Drucour was courteous, like his race, he had stubbornly refused to set them free, saying that if their people wanted them they could come and take them back.

And now they were coming!

The girls naturally wondered if the young guardsmen were with the British.

This company, commanded by Capt. George Lee, had become famous in other parts of the southern country, and under the eye of Col. Washington, the rising young Virginian, they had fought on more than one famous field.

The delights of old Williamsburg were not forgotten by the two prisoners of the fortress.

There were dances in the fortress where gay young French officers led their partners upon the floor, but Amy and the strange Joanna had but little heart for such pleasures there.

The flashing of brilliant uniforms dazzled their eyes in vain. They longed for the days of the provinces, for the gay parties of Virginia, where they could look upon the face of Col. Washington and see other friends who were true to them.

"Ah!" cried Amy; "we shall see our friends again. They are out yonder, Joanna. They are in the vessels that have come to take old Louisbourg."

"Joanna is glad to hear her sister say that; but these walls are strong, and our people will not take them in a day."

"Be it a week or a month, they will take them!" was the reply. "And the banners of King George will fly above the lilies of France."

CHAPTER II.

SUREFOOT'S MESSAGE.

Let us retrace our steps for a short time in our story and witness another scene which must of necessity lead up to the events just narrated.

Down in the province of Virginia, loyal as yet to the king, in the town of Winchester, dwelt a man destined in a few years to have his name heralded over the civilized world.

The star of his destiny had already risen over the bloody field of the Monongahela, and now, but a colonel in the British army, the people about him believed that he was soon to become one of the great men of the new world.

This man was George Washington, the second in command at Braddock's defeat, and since that unfortunate battle he had been left to guard the confines of Virginia from the marauding incursions of Indians and French.

Of lofty stature and handsome in appearance, there was about him an air of authority and security which made the people look up to him as their natural protector.

It was a night in March, and a young man wearing

the uniform of a captain in the king's service knocked at Washington's door.

The young colonel opened it in person, for he was alone, and stepped back with a smile of greeting as he seemed to recognize his visitor.

"Welcome, Capt. Lee," said Washington, as he extended his hand. "I have been wondering what had become of you, but you have answered my mental queries in person."

"I have been up around Cumberland of late," was the reply. "We have heard that Red Fox, the audacious red man, was in that neighborhood, bent on evil, but we have failed to find him."

"Then he did not give you a chance to have a tilt with him?"

"He kept his distance. I hear, though, that he is further north, and rumor has it that he was last seen headed for some of the northern French forts."

Washington crossed his legs, for he had taken a seat, and for a moment looked at his friend.

"What is there in these rumors that we are to try to take Louisbourg?" asked Capt. Lee.

"A good deal, I fancy."

"Then, the Young Guards are to see active service again?"

"That is, if you want to see it in Canada."

"Anywhere," was the reply. "We are tired of this guarding the frontier, for the duty does not give us

much to do. We haven't seen an Indian for weeks, and——"

"You would see much of them at the north," put in Washington. "I understand that Boscawen, the admiral, is expected there with the fleet while the land forces are to be under the command of Amherst."

"That is surely an omen of victory," exclaimed George Lee. "This new officer is said to be a veteran who never lets dangers frighten him, and under Amherst we would surely see some fighting."

"All you may want of it, young sir."

Then Washington abruptly changed the subject, and asked:

"What about Mistress Randolph?"

George Lee colored a little, at which the colonel smiled and said, banteringly:

"I see you are still thinking of her. Well, sir, she is one to think of. What has become of her?"

"She and Joanna went north some time ago to visit friends on the shores of Lake Champlain——"

"Quite a journey for the girls."

"They went under escort, sir."

"Which was advisable, owing to the state of affairs in that locality."

"Since which time I have no news of her. She was, of course, accompanied by Joanna, Straight Tongue's daughter, and she must have reached her destination safely."

Before Washington could reply both heard hasty footsteps outside, and the door was burst open.

"Surefoot!" cried Washington and Capt. Lee in the same breath.

The half-breed halted in the middle of the room, and for a moment looked at its occupants.

"What is it, Surefoot, my friend?" said the Virginia colonel.

"Bad enough. Mistress Randolph and her friend have fallen into the hands of Red Fox."

Capt. Lee uttered a cry of horror.

"Into the hands of that red fiend, who is in French pay?" he exclaimed.

"It is true. I have journeyed miles through the upper wilderness with my news. The escort were surprised on the shores of the lake, and dispersed by the Indians, and a few straggling French. There was no battle, for the surprise took place at night, and all fell into the hands of the enemy. The men were afterward tortured by the reds, but the young ladies were retained as prisoners. I got a look at them from a hill while they were being escorted north, and they recognized me. I followed the party some time, hoping for a chance to rescue them, but could not. At last, after I had found hanging to a bush in one of the nightly camps a bit of paper which asked me to carry the news down here and said that, from what they understood,

they were on the way to Louisbourg, I turned back, and here I am."

"You deserve a great deal of credit, Surefoot," said Washington. "You see, Capt. Lee, that you are to have something more than mere fighting on your hands."

"It cannot come any too soon," was the quick reply.

George Lee began to pace the floor in subdued excitement, and his face reddened and grew white by turns.

Surefoot looked on a minute, and then broke out with:

"There's no use crying over spilled milk. The young ladies are in the enemy's hands, and by this time may have reached the fortress by the sea. Why don't the English march thither?"

"I am expecting news of the march, or, in other words, orders at any time. I have been notified to keep a portion of my force ready to march at a moment's notice——"

"To Louisbourg?"

"To join Amherst."

"Confound the Indians!" cried George Lee. "I must carry the news to Frank and the others. Nimble Ned came back with me, which is lucky, for we may need him on the expedition. Red Fox, eh? That rascal shall pay for his work!"

"You know what that Indian is," quietly said Wash-

ington. "We met him at Braddock's field, and, but for him, we might not have suffered so severely."

Capt. Lee stopped in his paces and looked at Surefoot.

"I thank you for what you have done," he said, taking the half-breed's hand. "We will go together to the North just as soon as the orders come."

"They are here now," said Washington, as a man strode into the apartment.

He looked like a courier, for his deerskin leggings were splashed with mud, and he showed signs of hard riding.

Washington held out his hand and took from the newcomer a little packet, which the latter drew from his bosom.

Leaning toward the light the Virginian opened it, while Surefoot and George Lee looked anxiously on.

"Just as I thought," said Washington. "The orders have arrived. To-morrow all my available forces are to march to join the army."

"And yourself, colonel?"

"I am to remain here."

"How unfortunate!"

"Never mind. It is the command of those high in authority. We will not get to campaign together this time, Capt. Lee, but in the future let us hope that we will have that privilege again."

"I echo that wish from the bottom of my heart!" cried Lee. "Will you send the Guards?"

"Always the Guards!" laughed Washington. "Certainly, I shall send the Guards."

"Thank you. Come, Surefoot, we will impart the information to the lads."

Thereupon, George Lee and the scout passed from the room, leaving the commandant at Winchester alone, and in a few moments the Young Guards knew that at last another campaign confronted them.

While Lee and his young lieutenants were discussing the situation, there came up a man who was one to be conjured with.

They called him Straight Tongue, the famous Indian hunter and prince of the forest trail, and all looked at him as he halted in front of them.

"It is marching orders at last, lads!" he cried. "I have heard the terrible story from Surefoot. So our little ones have fallen into the hands of the enemy? Well, we may meet them at old Louisbourg, if we are so fortunate as to invest that stronghold."

It did not take long to get the forces in marching condition.

Washington had been called upon to furnish certain companies of good men to the expedition, and the following day the march was taken up for the seaboard.

The Young Guards, which had again been recruited to the maximum, were about to file out of Winchester,

where they were prime favorites, when a young man, dressed in half-hunting costume, placed a folded note in George Lee's hands.

Lieut. Vernon leaned forward and looked at his captain.

George opened it at the head of the company, and his color changed.

"How provoking!" he cried, with a look at Vernon. "That this should come now!"

"What is it?"

Vernon held out his hand and took the paper.

"That's insolence for you," he cried. "Who brought the message?"

"The young fellow yonder. No; he has already disappeared."

"Treat it with contempt!" exclaimed Vernon. "Send the message back to him if you send it at all—thus!" and he proceeded to tear it piecemeal and fling the fragments at his feet.

"I wouldn't have done that, I believe," said Capt. Lee; "but, never mind. It is done now, and I suppose the messenger is watching somewhere."

"Yes; yonder he stands, looking round the house. I'll bring him to his milk."

Lieut. Vernon bounded away, and the person whom he had singled out stood for a moment and then turned and ran.

Vernon chased him down one street and up another,

and being the fleeter person he collared him at last and hustled him back in triumph.

As he brought him up standing in front of Capt. Lee that person looked him over half contemptuously, and then said:

"Where is your master, Dick Parsons?"

The one addressed did not speak for a moment, but maintained an air of insolence until Vernon shook it out of him.

"Tell me!" cried Capt. Lee; "he sent you hither with the impudent message——"

"I carried the message, Capt. Lee."

"Of course you did. And you want to say, perhaps, that the duty wasn't to your liking."

"He forced me to come with it. He said——"

"No matter what he said," broke in Lee. "There's my answer," and he pointed to the bits of paper that littered the ground at his feet. "I want you to tell your master that I will attend to him after the campaign."

"Oh, you will fight him, then?"

"After the campaign," repeated Lee.

"Where are the Guards going?"

"Where your cowardly master would not go," was the response. "We are bound for Louisbourg, rumor says, and you can tell your master also that the Young Guards will ever be found in glory's van."

"I'll tell him, sir."

"Shall I shake him up a little, captain?" asked Vernon.

"No ill usage. He is, after all, but the tool of Dick Parsons. I will settle with his master after the campaign. He can tell him so. Let him go, Frank."

"But I have a little grudge against him myself. He once made faces at Joanna, and——"

"Settle your grievance, then," smiled Lee; "but don't kill him, please."

The next moment Lieut. Vernon turned the messenger halfway round and administered several hearty kicks, which nearly lifted their recipient from the ground.

"With my compliments!" cried Frank Vernon; "but for the fact that we are about to march, I would take something else out of your hide. Now, sir, make yourself scarce."

He pushed the messenger from him, and the fellow lost his footing and sprawled upon the ground. When he regained his feet he looked once at Vernon, and then shook his fist after him.

"Dick Parsons' tool is just like his master—venomous and cowardly. I wish we could meet them during the present campaign."

In another minute the drums rattled, the fifes filled the air with their wild, warlike screechings, and the Young Guards started on the most exciting campaign of their lives.

CHAPTER III.

CLOSE QUARTERS.

It was true that Drucour, the governor-general of Louisbourg, had sighted the enemy beyond the bastions of the fortress.

Admiral Boscawen had sailed from Halifax with the armament, twenty-three ships of the line, eighteen frigates, fire ships and transports, the latter bearing, for the most part, the soldiers and their accouterments.

It was a magnificent sight when the sun shone upon the sails of this mighty fleet, mighty for those days in American waters, and the men were eager for the expedition.

Pitt was now at the helm in England. That master spirit, who brooked no control, knew that he was to save the reputation of his country and break the rule of France on the shores of the new continent. He was the virile statesman of his day, the right hand of England, and the discoverer of Wolfe, the only man who could bring to perfection English rule in North America, and the bitter enemy of France.

Gen. Amherst joined Boscawen not far from Halifax, and took command of the expedition.

On board one of the ships were the Young Guardsmen in their neat green uniforms, which contrasted

strikingly with the bright red of the British regulars. They were as keen as the oldest regular for the fray, and they doubted not that under Amherst they would wrest the old fortress from the hands of Louis.

One night, as the vessels bore on their course, a hand was laid on Capt. Lee's arm, and he looked into the face of Nimble Ned.

The young fellow bent over his captain and placed his lips close to his ear.

"Hist, cap'n," said Ned. "Don't make any noise while I confab a minute with you. I have found him on board the ship."

Lee looked puzzled.

"You have found whom?" he asked.

"Dick Parsons."

The young captain nearly sprang upon his feet.

"What's that you tell me?" he cried. "Dick Parsons on board this vessel?"

"It is true, cap'n."

"Where is he?"

"Over there with some of the common soldiers."

"May you not be mistaken, Ned?"

"I wish I was, for I don't like a hair o' that renegade's head," was the answer. "But he's there in flesh and blood, and——"

"Show him to me, Ned."

"Not a fight, understand," cautioned the young pri-

vate of the Guards. "It is to be 'mum' for a while at least."

"I promise you, Ned; but where is he?"

Nimble Ned pointed to a particular spot, and Lee, rising, muffled himself in his cloak and slipped in the direction indicated.

Keeping in the shadow of a tall mast, Capt. Lee advanced till he could make out the recumbent figures of half a dozen men, and among them he singled out one upon which his gaze rested for some time.

Yes, Dick Parsons was on board.

Nimble Ned had not misnamed this young person when he called him a renegade, for his mother was a French woman, while his father was of mixed Indian and white blood, and a man who had low, murderous instincts.

In early life Dick had been cast adrift by his parents, growing up in the forest among the lowest associations, and stimulating all the time his evil propensities.

But nature had been good to him, for he was a handsome person, with a perfect figure and a taking face, and everywhere he was known as a young athlete, who could not be conquered by fatigue or excelled in woodcraft.

Time and again he had been suspected of giving information to the foes of the colonists, and once or twice had narrowly escaped with his life at their hands.

That he should side with the French was not surprising.

His life among the Indians had fitted him for treachery, and the French had made it a point to treat him well, hoping to be rewarded by his fealty to their cause.

And Dick had not disappointed them.

A short time prior to the opening of our story he had insulted Amy Randolph on the streets of Williamsburg, whither she had gone on a visit to friends, and Capt. Lee had taken up the matter with a good deal of spirit.

Indeed, he had caught Dick in a tavern in that old colonial town, where he had proceeded to throw him out of doors with scant ceremony, hence the hatred of the young scapegrace toward the guardsman.

The insulting challenge which we have seen Capt. Lee receive as the Young Guardsmen were about to march out of Winchester was in keeping with Dick's character, and when his messenger returned with the story of its reception he raved and declared that the matter should not end thus.

But Capt. Lee was surprised to see his enemy on board the frigate, and for some time he stood and watched him with growing interest and indignation.

Dick appeared to be asleep in the shadow of the mast, with his head resting against a knapsack, and this gave Capt. Lee a good opportunity to study him.

When he withdrew he slipped back to where Nimble Ned awaited him.

"Well?" said Ned.

"You were right, Dick is on board."

"I thought my eyes didn't deceive me, cap'n," was the answer. "I can tell a wolf when I see one. Now, he is up to some treachery."

"He would betray the whole expedition if he could. And there's no doubt that he is not alone. He has his accomplices with him, for he is in the pay of the French, and will not stop at any rascality."

"Why not throw him overboard?" asked Nimble Ned. "It could be done in the twinkling of an eye, an' no one would be the wiser for it."

"No! no! not that," replied Capt. Lee. "We will wait a while."

"Until he has accomplished his work?"

"Not that long. Time enough yet."

"Then I shall watch him, and at the first break he makes there will be some fun on this vessel."

If the young lads could have seen Dick Parsons at that moment their suspicions would have been more than aroused.

Scarcely had Capt. Lee gone back to his post than he raised his head and looked around.

There was an eager light in his eyes, and for a little while he steadied himself on his elbow, and now and then smiled to himself.

"Thought I didn't see him watching me," he laughed. "Don't I know you, Capt. Lee? An old fox never sleeps but with one eye open. I don't intend that you shall catch me napping, for when I pretend to be asleep I am widest awake."

Dick had eyes that would have done credit to a fox, for he looked down the deck littered with sleeping soldiers, and at last crept between the rows and disappeared below.

It was dark down there, with only a few lanterns to break the gloom, but he managed to find the person he sought.

"I'm watched," he said, in the lowest whispers, as he bent over a recumbent figure.

"Who told you?"

"What are my eyes for?" answered Dick. "Didn't I see Capt. Lee riveting his peepers upon me while I shammed slumber? Nimble Ned found me for him, and for ten minutes he studied me like a philosopher. We must keep shady during the day and—— Hist!"

Dick turned his head and caught sight of a figure ere it glided behind a stanchion.

"His spy now," he whispered again. "Nimble Ned, Chip."

"Where?"

"Behind yon stanchion."

The person called Chip, a youth of Dick's age, rose and drew a knife.

"Not now," admonished Dick. "That would precipitate matters, and over into the sea both of us would go. We must not quit the vessel, but with the soldiers. Such were the instructions, you know."

Chip nodded.

"You must keep your temper for the present. Your old friend, Lieut. Vernon, is also on board, and you can settle the old score some other time. Now, we must keep quiet till the landing is effected, and then we will proceed to play the little game set apart for us."

"It's just as you say, master; but it goes hard with me to wait. I can hardly hold back. Behind yon stanchion, you say? Well, I do see the fringe of something down there, and I'm blest if I don't think it ought to be hustled out of sight."

"But I say you must not," persisted Dick. "Here we are in the midst of hundreds of British regulars, to say nothing of the young Virginians. We must lie low for a spell at least. Between the reds and the greens we would be shown no mercy should we be discovered."

The two did not speak for a moment, and at last Dick withdrew, slipping up to the other deck watched by a pair of keen eyes from behind the stanchion.

"I don't think it would be hard to do," thought Chip, as he watched Nimble Ned. "Everything is so still down here, and I know where a fellow's throat is even in the dark. Why not try it?"

The knife which he had put up by Dick's command he again drew and ran his thumb down the keen edge of the blade.

Nimble Ned had not left the place where he had stopped for investigation, and Chip could make out the outlines of his figure.

Presently Dick's friend hugged the floor and slowly wriggled away.

He kept in the shadows of the semi-darkened hold, moving with the greatest circumspection, and at last reached a spot almost behind Nimble Ned.

The knife blade lay along his swarthy arm, and his keen eyes took note of everything.

"It'll only take a thrust," he said to himself. "There need be no groan, for with one hand at his throat and the knife in the other, I might as well deprive Capt. Lee of an ally first as last."

He now moved toward Nimble Ned with that same noiseless wriggle which resembled the crawl of a snake, now and then stopping to note that his intended victim did not suspect.

Ned for once in his life had been deceived.

He had not noticed the disappearance of Chip, for another person, one of the soldiers, had unwittingly rolled into his place, therefore, he was in total ignorance of the crawl.

Chip came closer and closer, his eyes on the knife ready for its victim.

Suddenly there came down the hatch a call which roused the soldiers:

"Ho, there! you lubbers in red!" the harsh voice said, "don't lie there with a storm about to swamp us!"

A few of the soldiers were awakened by the cry, but the others did not waken at all.

Nimble Ned turned halfway round and looked in the direction of the speaker.

It was well that he did so, for he caught sight of a half-raised figure within arm's length of him, and his heart went at a dash into his throat.

Chip had gotten behind him.

At first he could not believe his eyes, but there he was, with a long blade in his hand and every nerve drawn like a tiger's when about to spring.

"Ho! you rascal!" shouted Ned. "Got behind me, have you? Throw down your knife, or——"

"The storm! the storm!" came down from above, and Ned for the first time noticed the rocking of the frigate.

Chip grated his teeth and leaped straight at his victim.

There was no collision, for Nimble Ned, true to his well-won name, darted to one side and the enemy shot past him like a bolt hurled from a catapult.

"Missed me, did ye?" cried Ned. "It was as good as a mile, though it was close. Now, sir—what! want some more o' it?"

Chip was standing under a swaying lantern, with the knife still in his hand, and his dark eyes apparently on fire.

Ned went at him with the leap of a wild beast. He threw up one arm and swept aside the knife as it darted venomously at his heart, and closed with Chip.

In the confusion of soldiers rushing for the ladder the two young combatants were not noticed, and they had it all their own way in the hold.

Chip struck out viciously, but without avail, for, instead of his hand at Ned's throat, the fingers of the young guardsman had found his, and he felt them sinking vengefully underneath his skin.

The knife fell from Chip's hand, and Nimble Ned, striking him several hard blows full in the face, threw him aside and rushed with the last man upon deck. The storm had broken over the ship. The ocean was lashed into foam, and it seemed as if the ship and its human freight would soon feed the fishes of the northern sea.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GUARDS SHOW THEIR METTLE.

Fate had decreed, however, that Amherst's soldiers should not perish in a storm at sea, but before the guns of Louisbourg.

The storm was severe, but did not last long, for the ocean, wrapp'd in fury, soon recovered its wonted quiet and the stars came out as bright and beautiful as before.

The flotilla bore on its way with the loss of a few spars and other rigging, but a life had not been sacrificed to the fury of the elements.

Day breaking over the sea showed the anxious soldiers their first glimpse of the rocky shores of Cape Breton, and great cheers rolled over the decks.

The men knew they were in sight of their destiny, for the great rocks which they could scan from the decks would have to be assaulted with the bayonet.

The Young Guardsmen enjoyed the sight immensely, for they saw Cape Breton for the first time, and would soon gaze upon the flag of France waving from the ramparts of the fortress.

Capt. Lee and Lieut. Vernon were especially interested in the spectacle, for they doubted not, from

what they had learned from Surefoot, that Amy and Joanna were prisoners behind those great bastions.

Nimble Ned for once had kept the secret of his bout with Chip in the hold of the frigate, for he did not care to acquaint Capt. Lee with it, but he resolved to watch the young rascal with the greatest care.

Against the shores of Gabarus Bay, where Boscawen hoped to land the troops, the waves thundered with all their might.

They rolled high and strong over the rocky beach, and attacked the rocks like lines of regulars.

It was, as it had been for ages, a battle between sea and land, the one to assault, the other to repel, and to the young Virginians it was an imposing sight.

Amherst, eager to effect a landing, pushed into Freshwater Cove, and awaited his opportunity.

Batteries had been planted by Drucour for the purpose of beating off a landing there, and when the vessels began to discharge their soldiers the guns opened and vied with the thunder of the sea.

It was a spectacle worth living years to witness, the many boats pushing through the roaring surf filled with redcoats over whom shone the bayonets of their king.

For some time the ocean got the better of the battle, but at length a landing was effected, and long lines of scarlet were drawn up on the beach.

The French batteries continued to play upon the

English from a hill, and men went down before their discharges.

The Young Guardsmen stood within reach of this iron hail, and saw more than one of their number reel before it.

Amherst steadied his lines and looked straight ahead with the fearlessness of a soldier.

"The enemy must be routed," he said to Gen. Lawrence. "We must take the hill. Who will lead the men?"

"Let me lead them, sir," said a voice at Amherst's side.

The commander looked at the sickly-looking soldier in scarlet who had spoken, and then saluted him.

It was Gen. Wolfe, the future hero of Quebec, and as he stood there with the light of battle in his eye he looked like a demigod.

"You can proceed, sir," said Amherst. "Take your men and silence the batteries."

The young hero looked up and down the lines.

For a moment his eyes rested upon Capt. Lee at the head of the Young Guardsmen, and a smile came to his lips.

Nodding slightly to Capt. Lee, whose acquaintance he had made on the vessel, he swung his sword in mid-air and shouted:

"Forward!"

The scarlet line started, banners were lifted higher

as the wild bugles sent forth their inspiring notes, and "For Louisbourg!" rose above the din of the cannon.

The guardsmen were in the front line, the young Virginians never quavered as the rush began, and in a flash, as it were, they were met by a flame of fire that belched from the royal batteries.

Then the fight became general. The redcoats had found their old-time enemies at last, and the discovery thrilled the heart of every soldier.

Men dropped on the sand and fell among the rocks.

Yet the French batteries blazed right in their faces, cutting down four color bearers, but the colors rose again and the cross of St. George did not touch the ground.

"Forward! Take the batteries!" shouted Wolfe, as he threw himself into the midst of the conflict.

A ball carried his hat from his head, another pierced his waistcoat, cutting off some fringe, but he was not checked.

Up the hill went the storming redcoats.

The French held to their guns till they saw that the English were determined to have them, when they fired a last volley and retreated, pulling their cannon toward the fortress.

The trophies of the charge were not great, only two guns, but Amherst had gained his point, and thereafter his troops could land at will, which was what he wanted.

Night fell over the first battlefield at Louisbourg.

"I wonder if they know we are here," said Capt. Lee to Vernon, as they looked and saw the lights of the town within the fortress.

"They must believe it, anyhow," was the reply.

"What's that, young sirs?" said a voice at their side, and they looked into the face of Straight Tongue.

The old hunter looked worn in his backwoods costume, but his eye was full of fire.

"We cannot communicate with them," said Lee.

"We might," was the reply. "It has not been tried yet."

"That is true; but who can enter Louisbourg for us?"

"Why not Straight Tongue?"

"You?" cried Vernon, starting back. "Why, your life would not be worth a thimbleful of powder if they discovered you. You enter the French fortress? Never, Straight Tongue."

But the eye of the man who listened did not lose snap.

He waved his hand toward the fortress, dimly discernible like a distant mountain, and smiled.

"My child is there. They may mistreat her. Woe to them if they do!"

"It shall be a day of vengeance!" cried Vernon. "And if they should insult Amy, Capt. Lee——"

"They shall reckon with me."

Silently Straight Tongue withdrew, and the boys did not know he had vanished till they looked around.

"Will he try it?" asked Vernon.

"I think not. Straight Tongue is discreet, but his love for Joanna is so strong."

"And Surefoot? What has become of him? I haven't seen him since we landed."

"Surefoot is here!"

Sure enough, the half-breed stood before the Young Guardsmen, and waited for them to continue.

"There is no way of getting a message to our friends if they are yonder?" asked Vernon.

Surefoot shook his head slowly, and then brightened.

"I'm not quite sure there is not," he said, speaking with his usual deliberation. "Louisbourg is strong and well guarded, but——"

He paused and looked forward for a few moments.

"I have played Indian before," he said, scarcely above his breath.

"But you don't mean——"

"Why not?" he said, laying his hand on Capt. Lee's arm. "They have Indians in the fortress."

"Red Fox and his minions, think you?"

"Doubtless."

"Red Fox is keen, and would discover any deception."

"There are those who are just as good at that as Red Fox," said Surefoot.

"But discovery means death."

"Surefoot knows that, young sirs. He has not lived for nothing in the forests."

Half a minute later the half-breed spoke, but in another tone:

"Let Surefoot enter the fort and find out what has become of the girls. He takes his life in his hands; but he has come out of the fire before. He fears not the Frenchies, nor the redskins. The reds once had Surefoot tied to the stake, but they did not burn him, for he is here without a scar on his body. Surefoot has lived among the reds, and he can talk their lingo. He will go, young sirs."

Seeing that nothing they might say could dissuade the half-breed from carrying out his project, they bade him act with the greatest discretion, pressed his hand in a silent good-by, and saw him steal away among the shadows.

"It's a perilous undertaking," said Capt. Lee. "The man has gone into the jaws of death."

"It was of his own choosing," replied Vernon. "Nothing could have kept him back."

"It is more than Nimble Ned would have thought of, and he is sometimes reckless to a fault. Let us move down to the other side of the camp. The night seems lighter there, and we may learn something as the place is nearer the general's quarters."

They slipped from the spot and moved some distance to the left.

The sailors were still landing stores and guns from the vessels, and lights flashed along the shore.

The young soldiers walked side by side to a place from which they could witness the unlading, under lantern light, and the scene was one never to be forgotten.

"Look yonder," suddenly cried Capt. Lee, catching hold of Frank's sleeve. "Look at that figure standing behind those boxes. It is Dick Parsons."

Vernon leaned forward and studied the figure for a few moments.

"It looks like him, but what would he be doing here? If he landed with us, why is he not in the fortress?"

"That is for Dick to answer in person," was the reply. "He must be in the pay of the French, and—What is he doing?"

"Cutting into one of the canvas sacks with his knife."

"For a purpose, of course?"

"He never does anything without a purpose."

Capt. Lee half drew his sword and took a step forward when Vernon pulled him back.

"Don't be hasty," said the young lieutenant. "Let us watch Master Dick a little further. He cannot get away."

They both fell to watching the young person discovered in the act of ripping open one of the sacks unloaded from the storeship with his pocketknife.

He was cutting along the seam, and presently he ran his hand into the sack and pulled something out, which he put to his mouth.

"Oh!" grinned Vernon, "Master Dick is quietly taking a little supper. He has found the bread sacks. No doubt he is hungry, for he did not appear among us on shipboard at meal time, and is now making up for lost hours."

Dick was enjoying himself in his surreptitious repast, and Lee and Vernon watched him good-naturedly.

When he had finished he wiped his lips with great gusto and slipped away.

"He's coming toward us," whispered Capt. Lee. "We shall have a good look at him now."

Master Parsons came on until he was within a few yards of the Young Guardsmen, when he suddenly halted and clapped his hands thrice.

A figure, till then unseen by the lads, bounded out of the night and joined Dick.

"The spy's accomplice," said Vernon.

"You are right. There is villainy afoot right in our camp to-night."

Dick and Chip, for the renowned Chip it was, put their heads together and talked in low tones.

"Was it really good?" asked Chip.

"As good as army bread generally is," said Dick. "But we shall get better over yonder," and he looked toward the fortress. "It was a fight, eh, Chip?"

"A hard fight," was the response. "I never thought the redcoats had that much fight in them. And did you see how the Young Guardsmen stuck to their work?"

"They had to. They had British bayonets behind them," sneered Master Dick.

"This is infamous!" hissed Vernon. "This is an insult that he must pay for."

"Not yet," admonished Capt. Lee. "We must swallow the insult for the present, and——"

"Chip," broke in the voice of Dick Parsons, "we'll get to see the girls again, and Mistress Amy shall dance attendance upon me. She's yonder in the fortress, safe and sound, thanks to Red Fox, our old friend and ally."

CHAPTER V.

THE SHADOWS OF DEATH.

Surefoot had a plan in his head which, if successfully carried out, would enable him to enter the fortress of Louisbourg and learn the situation of the fair prisoners, Amy and Joanna.

An expert in woodcraft, and one of the best of trailers, having spent his life in the forest and among its wild denizens, he was just the man to carry out anything of this kind, and when he left George and Frank he had already half matured his designs.

The fortress was well guarded by nearly five thousand soldiers, to say nothing of the citizens of the town within the fortifications.

The French had hundreds of Indian allies, whom they had won to their side by good treatment, and among them was Red Fox, the Iroquois, one of the most dreaded redskins along the frontier.

He stood high in the estimation of the French, and Drucour set great store on his friendship.

Soon after leaving the lads, Surefoot might have been seen in another part of the newly-made camp of the British.

He no longer looked like the half-breed scout and man of the forest, but in his Indian garb, with his face

painted and otherwise changed by art, he was ready for his perilous undertaking.

Surefoot made his way over the battlefield of the previous day, finding here and there evidences of the hard struggle for the ground, and at last stood near the French pickets.

These pickets were on the land side of the fortress, for on the sea side none were needed save the guards on the bastions.

The night that fell suited the half-breed's purpose exactly.

With the cunning of an Indian he wriggled past the picket and stood between it and the wall.

In another minute he had nearly stumbled upon a man who rose from the ground, a French soldier who had stolen from the fortress for a lark of some sort.

"Hello, there!" thought Surefoot, and then he addressed the soldier in French, for the Iroquois were supposed to be fairly well familiar with the language from their long associations with the soldiers of Louis.

The soldier came forward.

"Which is the gate, brother?" asked Surefoot.

The soldier, looking at the supposed savage for a moment, pointed away and nodded.

In another moment the half-breed was on his way to the guarded entrance.

"Halt!" came out loud and clear from a dark figure at the portal. The adventurer stopped.

"The countersign," said the guard. "Oh, I see, a red!"

"I am of the Iroquois, brother," said Surefoot. "I have been long on the trails of the forests and the great lakes. I have passed through the fires of the British out yonder, and I would speak to my brother, the great soldier of the French king."

"But I've got my orders," persisted the guard. "No one passes here without the countersign."

"What's that, Andre?" called down a voice from overhead. "Who have you got there?"

"A redskin who wants to speak to the commandant."

"Well, let him pass."

"But the countersign?"

"I'll stand good for that, Andre. What nation?"

"The Iroquois."

"Ask him his name."

"Long Bear," answered Surefoot, speaking for himself.

"Let Long Bear come in, Andre."

The sentry drew off and the gate was opened from the inside.

The half-breed was getting along pretty well, but the ordeal was yet to come.

Once within the fort, where there were many lights, he was in the greatest danger.

Everywhere he noted signs of long resistance to the

British ; soldiers were everywhere, some discussing the fight of the previous day, while others were cleaning their guns and looking to the defenses of the fortress.

"So you're the red who has just come in?" said a voice at Surefoot's side. "You say you want to speak to the governor?"

"Where is the great soldier?"

"This way, if you please."

Surefoot looked at the person who had addressed him, and saw a lieutenant, who regarded him closely.

"Drucour, our commander, will see you, I know, for, if you have passed through the enemy's lines, you must have kept your eyes open."

"Long Bear never shuts his eyes," was the answer, and Surefoot passed on with the officer.

In a little while he was conscious of a strong light in his face, and a large room in the fortress held him.

While he gazed round the apartment a door opened and Drucour, the commandant, appeared before him.

Surefoot had never seen Drucour before.

The French officer looked resplendent in his showy uniform, with its gold and lace trimmings. He carried a handsome sword at his side, and looked almost as pompous as the monarch he served.

"So," said Drucour, when he had looked Surefoot over from top to toe—"so you have just come in from the enemy's camp."

"Surefoot has passed between the fires of the British.

He has seen their men and their great ships in the water."

"That is good. What are they doing?"

"Just now they are resting from the fight. They have been punished by the balls of your soldiers, white brother. They have fallen like the leaves before the storm, and the ground in their camps is red."

"Good!" cried the Frenchman, as he clapped his hands. "I am glad you have seen so much, Long Bear. We did give it to them; but it is only a little thing to what will happen if they dare open on the fortress. Think you they will do that?"

"They say they will land their big guns to-morrow, and that then they will humble the pride of the king, our brother across the great sea."

"They are boasters," laughed Drucour. "They will all fall before the walls of Louisbourg, and we will have to leave them to the ravens of the North."

"That will be good," said Surefoot. "The Iroquois hope all will fall before the big guns of the French."

Drucour took a hasty turn about the room.

Just then the door opened and a young officer placed a note in his hands.

He opened it, glanced over the paper for a moment and threw it upon the table.

It fell right before Surefoot's eyes, and at a glance he read as follows:

"Be on your guard. A spy has entered the fortress to-night."

It was enough to turn back the very blood in Surefoot's veins, but he mastered the emotion that swept through his frame and looked at the commandant as cool as ever.

It was a time for nerve.

"When did you leave your people at the South?" suddenly asked Drucour.

"Two moons ago. Long Bear has been in the forest all the time, but he did not move rapidly."

"A little hunt of your own, eh?"

"Long Bear has been in the forests along the lakes, and he was watching the redcoats who are marching north."

"What? Another army?"

"Yes; as numerous as the sands upon the seashore."

"What is its object?"

"Long Bear did not find out. He passed it on its way up the long lake——"

"Lake George, you must mean?"

Surefoot nodded.

"By heavens! these British are active!" cried Drucour. "They mean to give us all the trouble they can, but we will meet them with the valor of our people and they shall feel the mailed hand of French authority in North America. Can you read the writing of the white people?"

As he spoke Drucour pushed the note toward Surefoot, who looked at it a moment and shook his head.

"Long Bear never learned the silent tongue of the white people," he said.

"Some of your people might read it," was the reply. "It tells me, sir brother, that a spy has entered the fortress. You did not see anyone on your way?"

"Long Bear saw a sneaking figure in the forest, but he did not watch him long, for he was eager to meet his white brother, the king's great soldier."

"By the way," suddenly said Drucour, "I have several Iroquois in the fortress. I have the well-known chief, Red Fox. Wait. I will send for him."

Well might the half-breed start and tremble. The ordeal was at hand.

Drucour tinkled a silver call bell on the commandant's table and an orderly poked his head into the room.

"Send Red Fox hither," said Drucour, and the man vanished.

"Sit down," said the commander to Surefoot, but that person merely folded his arms upon his breast and struck a statuesque attitude and became the savage more than ever.

He did not fear the meeting with Red Fox, although he was in great danger of being denounced as an impostor, for Red Fox knew every warrior of his tribe, while, on the other hand, the Iroquois were so nu-

merous that he (Red Fox) could not possibly have met all the warriors of the different scarlet clans.

Ten minutes elapsed when the door swung open, and Surefoot stood face to face with the craftiest redskin of the great lake region.

Red Fox, in full war dress, was a handsome person, and his eye was like the eye of the eagle, piercing and keen. A better warrior never donned war paint and his command over his people was wonderful.

As he strode into the commandant's apartment he caught sight of Long Bear and stopped suddenly.

Folding his arms on his broad chest he looked Surefoot over from head to foot, taking in his garb in every particular, from the bearskin on his shoulders to the pendant of bear claws on his bosom.

Then he turned his attention to Drucour.

"What does my white chief want with Red Fox?" he asked.

Drucour, who had watched the Iroquois as he took in Surefoot's physique, smiled.

"Do you know Long Bear of the Iroquois?" he asked.

Again the eagle orbs of Red Fox came back to the man he was expected to betray, and for another moment the scrutiny lacked nothing in its severity.

"Red Fox knows Long Bear," said he.

Surefoot wondered, but did not speak.

He stood as loftily as ever, his gaze seemingly fas-

tened on something on the map-hung wall beyond him, and he did not seem to take the slightest notice of Red Fox.

"That is all," said Drucour. "I only wanted you to identify this warrior, if you could."

"Red Fox has known Long Bear many moons. They have hunted together in the forest and have been companions on the chase."

"What a lie," thought Surefoot, but he dared not speak his opinions.

Drucour waved his hand.

"That is all," he said to Red Fox.

A mystery formed in Surefoot's heart.

What had drawn those words from the Iroquois he did not know. He knew that Red Fox knew he was deliberately lying, and it must be for a purpose.

What that purpose was he could not say. Another word from the lips of the Iroquois and Surefoot's life would not be worth the snuffing of a candle.

As Red Fox turned to quit the room he threw a swift glance at the half-breed, the door opened and closed and he was again alone with Drucour.

"Now, my brother," spoke the commandant, "you are at liberty to go. You will find some of your tribe within the fortress, but you must not quit it without my authority. We must repel these English and sadden the heart of their king across the water. You understand?"

Surefoot nodded.

Without dropping his hands to his side he turned to the entrance, opened the door and passed out.

As he reached the open air without the room a hand was laid on his arm, and he looked into the eager eyes of Red Fox.

"Come, brother," said the Iroquois. "You must quit the fortress at once!"

Surefoot looked astounded.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH SUREFOOT CHANGES HIS NAME.

Why should he leave?

Surefoot regarded the Iroquois a moment and then walked a step forward.

But the hand on his arm did not lose its grip, and he found that he could not shake off the clutch of the redskin.

"Why does Red Fox drive his brother from the French fort?" he asked.

"Let Long Bear look down into his heart and answer his own question."

"But Long Bear cannot answer it."

Thereupon Red Fox leaned toward Surefoot and dropped his voice to the fringe of a whisper.

"Red Fox knows, but Red Fox can keep a secret."

Surefoot did not speak.

"Brother, you must go," continued Red Fox. "If the French commander had used his eyes a little more——"

The hand of Surefoot fell heavily upon the Iroquois' shoulder.

"You must speak with another tongue," he said, in low, but determined tones. "You insinuate. You would say that I am not Long Bear of the Iroquois."

"Red Fox will say nothing of the kind."

"Then——"

"There was a Long Bear of the Iroquois, but he fell moons ago at the hands of a white hunter. His bones lie somewhere on the shores of the great lake to the south. Red Fox has lied for your life, brother. Should his warriors now within the fortress hear you called Long Bear they will fall upon you and take your life."

"Why?"

"Because they will think you bewitched, since you have come back from the silent lands of the Manitou after the white hunter pierced your brain with his bullet. That is why Red Fox said to-night in presence of the great captain that he knew you. He had to do it to save your life."

Surefoot saw all now.

He had unwittingly taken the name of a warrior known to have been dead probably for years, and the Indians are superstitious.

Red Fox spoke truly; should he be known in the fortress as Long Bear he would be looked upon as a bewitched person or a deceiver, and killed on sight.

"Long Bear has a chance for his life," said Red Fox. "If he will remain in the fortress he must at once take another name."

"Red Fox perhaps speaks with a clean tongue.

Long Bear does not want to perish before he can help the French captain beat off his enemies, the English."

"That is good," smiled the Iroquois. "What name will my brother take?"

Surefoot seemed to reflect a moment.

"Why not take the name of Darting Arrow?" suggested Red Fox.

"Brother, you speak again with a good, clean tongue," said Surefoot. "From this moment I am the Darting Arrow of the Iroquois."

Red Fox laid his hand on Surefoot's shoulder.

"My brother is safe now," said he. "He can come and go among the red people within the fortress and his life will not be in danger. But tell me, Darting Arrow, what ever become of Laughing Eyes?"

Surefoot was again in a dilemma, but his quick wit came to his rescue.

"Red Fox must know that Darting Arrow has forgotten all that Long Bear knew, therefore, since Long Bear is dead, he can know nothing of Laughing Eyes."

Red Fox, seeing how he had caught himself, let a smile wreath his lips for a moment and in another he was walking away.

Surefoot followed him a little while with his eyes and then turned in another direction.

Safe for the present at least, he was anxious to learn what had become of the young girls, and, in order

to carry out his designs, he moved hither and thither, all the time keeping his eyes open.

Suddenly he heard familiar voices behind him and, turning slowly round so as not to betray himself, he saw the very persons he was looking for.

Amy and Joanna had stolen from their quarters arm in arm and were watching some Indians playing at forest quoits in the light of a number of torches.

They seemed deeply interested in the game and felt that they were perfectly safe, for were they not captives under the eye of the commandant?

For a little while Surefoot, now the Darting Arrow of the red nation, watched the girls askance, and then withdrew to a spot where he would not be subjected to a strong light. From this point of vantage he continued to regard the captives, and when they moved away he slipped after them.

He was eager to tell them that they had at least one firm friend under the lilies of France, and that, no matter how the siege went, they should not suffer while his arm was near to protect or succor.

Amy suddenly stopped and pointed toward the land gate, saying at the same time to her companion :

“Do you think they can force the gate, Joanna?”

Straight Tongue’s daughter slowly shook her head.

“The French will defend it well.”

“But the English are strong and have brought their great guns with them.”

"Look at the great guns yonder," and Joanna waved her hands toward the bastions that were lined with cannon. "The English have to attack; the French defend."

"I know that Drucour has all the advantage, but will not God fight for the English?"

"Why for them more than for the French?" hastened the fair Joanna. "It is simply two wolves clawing one another, and the one with the sharpest claws will win the fight."

Just then Surefoot reached a point within a few feet of where the captives stood.

He made a little noise that attracted their attention, and as he glided forward he said in low, quick tones:

"Courage! Your friends are near!"

To hear such words uttered at such a place and time startled the prisoners of the French.

They turned quickly and saw the figure of Surefoot, as Darting Arrow, within arm's reach of them.

"What is that?" cried Amy, but the next moment she paused and gazed with astonishment at Surefoot.

"You have ears," said the spy. "I need not speak again. Good-night."

He slipped away, leaving the captives as much puzzled as before, and for some time they looked after him, unable to believe the evidence of their ears.

"It was an Indian," said Amy.

"But he spoke the best of English. May he not have come in from the camp of our friends?"

"The enemy would not admit him to the fortress."

"But ah! these spies; they know," exclaimed Amy Randolph. "He might have had a message from George and Frank."

"If they are out yonder," was the reply.

Still puzzled, the fair captives walked away and returned to the little room which for months had been their quarters.

"It is strange. So we have friends near at hand," exclaimed Amy. "Surely they must be the Guardsmen. And the Indian who spoke such good English must be a spy?"

As for Surefoot, he had reached another part of the fortress and, climbing upon the bastion, stood with the night wind upon his face looking out to sea.

The ground of the fortress was beneath him, and he glanced down at the collection of huts and stone houses within the inclosure; recalling at the same time the strange actions of Red Fox.

He stood upon the top of the wall looking at the lights of the shipping in the wave-rocked harbor and thinking that soon perhaps those vessels would fall into the hands of the English.

For Drucour had a fleet at his command and he expected in time to hear its guns as they would aid him in repulsing the foe should he try him on the sea side.

Under the stars Surefoot stood for some time on the bastion.

The night wind swept through his long hair and toyed with the fringe of his Indian dress.

No one seemed near him.

At last he turned to jump down, but that moment he caught sight of a darkish object that lay upon the top of the rampart like a dog stretched out.

At first it did convince Surefoot that it was a dog, but as his eyes had become accustomed to the night, he perceived that it was more man than animal.

Surely that object was not there when he mounted the sea bastion.

It must have crawled to the spot while his eyes were turned in another direction, and the longer he regarded it the more he scented danger.

There were no sentries on the bastion at that particular point.

In fact, none were needed, for the English were busy on the land side and had not thought of attacking by sea.

Surefoot leaned forward a little and looked the figure over again.

"A foe," said he, under his breath. "I am watched. There are eyes in Louisbourg to-night that have it in for me."

He made a motion as if to quit the bastion, but at the same time he looked over his shoulder.

The figure stirred and rose upon its knees.

Sure enough it was a man!

Surefoot did not betray his emotion. He only clutched tighter the horn hilt of the knife he carried in his buckskin belt and looked again.

Then he mentally calculated the distance between him and the watcher.

It was not so great but that he could cover it at a bound, and his mind was made up.

He could not afford to have a spy at his heels in old Louisbourg.

Once more the half-breed stepped forward and the spy at his heels stirred again.

Then, suddenly whirling round, Surefoot leaped straight at the man on the bastion.

There was a collision, a grapple and the hand of the half-breed was at the other's throat.

Surefoot had not uttered a word.

He held the fellow at arms' length and looked into his face.

He was not an Indian, nor a French soldier; he was a forester like himself, clad in half-civilized garb and as wiry as a cat.

"Let me go," the captured spy managed to say. "I wasn't laying for you."

At this palpable lie Surefoot only laughed.

All his blood seemed to dash like a stream of lava through his veins.

"You lie," he hissed, speaking for the first time since the grapple.

"It is true. I was waiting for the governor."

"For Drucour?—on this bastion?"

"Yes; he comes hither every night about this hour."

"For what?"

"For a look over the sea. Then he is in love with one of the white prisoners in the fortress and she sometimes meets him here."

"That is false!" cried Surefoot. "You are not waiting for the governor."

"You are not Indian, though you wear the dress."

"Never mind what I am. And who are you?"

"I am Jean Targot, and I want Drucour's life. He had me tied up ten days ago and whipped till my back was cut into strips."

"And pray why should he whip you?"

"Because I made faces—good-natured ones—at one of the fair captives. Not at the stylish one who carries her head so high, but the darker sister—the one they call Joanna."

"He whipped you for that, did he?"

"Yes, and I want his blood for it."

"You'd kill Drucour, would you?"

"I'd kill him and throw him over the bastion."

"Which you shall not do, coward!" cried Surefoot.

"What! would you prevent?"

"That I would."

“Hold! there is the governor now!” cried the other, Jean Targot. “I want the blood of that Frenchman and——”

But Surefoot pushed him back, and suddenly released his hold, and the would-be assassin staggered to one side and, losing his footing, tumbled headlong from the bastion into the night and perhaps the sea.

Then Surefoot leaped to the ground on the inner side, for he did not care to again encounter the governor of Louisbourg.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SACRIFICE OF HONOR.

The day that succeeded the one of the first grapple between the French and English for the prize of Louisbourg was taken up with the landing of the large guns from the fleet.

To effect this many soldiers were called upon, and among these were the Young Guardsmen, who were veritable athletes, for their lives had been spent in the open air, which had hardened their muscles until they seemed muscles of steel.

Nothing had been seen of Dick Parsons and his young tool, Chip, after the theft of bread from the sacks, but Capt. Lee kept a good lookout for him.

"I tell you, Vernon," he said to the lieutenant, "this rascal is up here for bad work. He is undoubtedly a French spy, for there is French blood in his veins, and we have already had ample evidence that he will do the cause of our king all the harm he can."

"He must be met as soon as possible and silenced in some manner," was Vernon's reply. "Nimble Ned is looking for him, and Lieut. Mason and Sergt. Willis have been posted. We must contrive to circumvent Dick before he betrays the army in some manner."

This seemed the right thing to do, but the young

officers did not know that within a few yards of where they stood a spy was listening with eager ears.

This was no less a person than Dick Parsons himself, dressed as a young Indian, for a number of the red sons of the forest were attached to Amherst's command as scouts and spies, and some of these were not out of their teens.

When not at work, the Indians had a habit of lying round the camp, filching whenever they had a chance, and the soldiers for the most part did not take much notice of them.

They were a lazy, disreputable set, ready to steal or scalp a friend, and some one said that they were ready to sell their hatchets one day to the English and the next to their enemies.

Dick Parsons, knowing the immunity the redskins enjoyed in Amherst's camp, had made himself up into a good-looking Indian, following Surefoot's example, of which he was ignorant, although he knew that the half-breed had announced his intention of entering the fortress.

The note which entered the place and found its way to Drucour, as we have seen, came from this young rascal; but, so far, it had failed of its mission.

Dick bit his lips hard when he overheard the complimentary terms in which Capt. Lee and Vernon had referred to him.

"Just wait till I get a chance," he muttered. "My

day is near at hand, and if you don't wish yourselves back in Virginia before I am through with you, I'll sell my head for a football."

The night came again dark and lowering.

A heavy storm attacked the region, drenching the soldiers who remained on the land, while the vessels in the cove tossed as if some sea demons were rocking them to their destruction.

Capt. Lee was trying to snatch a little sleep, which was difficult under the circumstances, when he was awakened by some one.

"The general wants to see you," said a voice.

Lee sprang up and buckled on his sword.

Gen. Amherst had come ashore and was sharing the discomforts of the campaign with his men.

Capt. Lee knew where to find him, and in a few minutes he was admitted by the sentry.

He found not only Amherst in the tent, but Wolfe and Lawrence.

The three generals looked perturbed about something, and as Lee entered they all turned to him.

The young guardsman saluted and drew off to await his general's pleasure.

"Capt. Lee, we have sent for you to secure a little information for us. We know of no one better fitted for the undertaking we have in view, for your knowledge of warfare in this country exceeds our own."

Capt. Lee bowed.

"We learn, moreover," continued Gen. Amherst, "that a friend of yours, a young lady, Mistress Randolph, was so unfortunate, some time ago, as to fall into the hands of the enemy, and that she is now suspected of being a prisoner in the fortress or the town."

"You are correct in this," said Lee. "Mistress Randolph and her friend, Joanna, the daughter of Straight Tongue, are now within the fortress."

"You have heard from them since we landed?"

"I have not, your excellency. But I have every reason to believe that my surmises are correct."

"So much the better," resumed Amherst, with a glance at the other generals. "The young ladies have been within the fortress so long that they have doubtless picked up some information regarding its armament, which would be of incalculable value to us just now."

"If they have enjoyed the freedom of fortress and town."

"Exactly, Capt. Lee. Drucour, from what we know of him, is a French gentleman, and would not keep the young ladies locked up. They have, no doubt, been permitted to rove when and where they pleased, and must of necessity have seen a good deal."

"You may be entirely correct, your excellency."

"This being the case," said Amherst, as if that point had been settled, "we would request you to enter the fortress——"

A slight start on Capt. Lee's part broke the general's sentence.

"Hear me through, Capt. Lee," he said.

"I am listening, sir."

"I know, or think I do, what is in your head. You are not asked to enter the fort as a spy; on the contrary, you can go in as a deserter."

"Worse yet, your excellency," said George, with a grim smile.

"Not quite so bad as a spy's mission. The matter can be easily arranged."

"But would not my presence in the fortress, seeing that I am a friend of the fair captives, place me in a peculiar situation?"

"In a manner, yes," answered Amherst. "You can have a mock trial for disobedience of orders during the late fight and can be sentenced to be cashiered; then you can desert to escape the penalty being carried out in person and——"

"That is pretty hard for a young soldier to bear up under, even for a time," spoke up Wolfe.

"For the cause I am willing to obey your excellency, if he commands this," said Lee.

"Under the circumstances, I feel it my duty to command it," was the reply.

"When shall I begin to play my part?" asked Capt. Lee.

"You will be arrested to-morrow at sunrise for disobedience of orders——"

"Not cowardice, mind you, Gen. Amherst."

"Not cowardice," was the reply, as a smile hovered round Amherst's mouth.

"Then I submit."

At this juncture Wolfe came forward and took Capt. Lee's hand.

"I will stand between you and the future as regards your standing with this army," he said, in kindly tones. "I will never forget this sacrifice, Capt. Lee."

"It is really for the success of our undertaking?"

"Essentially so," cried the impetuous Wolfe. "We must know something of the armament of the fortress before we can carry out the plans we have in view."

Capt. Lee walked from Amherst's quarters in no enviable frame of mind.

True, he was getting nearer to Amy and Joanna, but how?

He was going into Louisbourg with a tainted name; he was going thither as a deserter from the army, with a sentence over his head.

What would the Guards think? What would the brave lads say with whom he had served so long?

It was bitter food for thought as the young provincial walked through the night.

He dared not tell Vernon. He must keep his secret from Nimble Ned, and the Guards must believe him

a recreant, if they could, for a part of the time during the fight they had been separated from him and had not been able to keep tab on his movements.

It was a long night to Capt. Lee.

True to the plan, the next morning he was placed under arrest.

Vernon turned pale with indignation when he heard the news.

"It is infamous!" he cried. "What! Capt. Lee disobey orders? It is the work of some secret foe. Surely Gen. Amherst does not believe the charges——"

"But he has ordered George's arrest," said Lieut. Mason.

"I know, but——"

"What's all this hubbub about the cap'n being put under arrest?" exclaimed Nimble Ned, as he came up.

He was told in a few words.

"It is false!" he cried. "The cap'n never thought of such a thing. I guess I can pick out the rascal who is at the bottom of this. Just wait till I see him again, and if I don't slit his weasand you can kick me into the middle of next week. Where is Dick Parsons?"

As no one could answer Nimble Ned, he started on a tour through the camp in hopes of meeting slippery Dick, upon whom he intended to wreak his vengeance without ceremony.

It would not have been good for the young half-

breed if Nimble Ned could have found him, but, as it was, the lad came back to his friends greatly put out over the whole matter.

"Where's Amherst?" he next exclaimed.

A moment later he had bounded away like a deer and came suddenly upon the commanding general superintending the landing of some guns.

"Gen. Amherst," cried Ned, presenting himself to the officer resplendent in full regimentals. "It's all false, those charges against Capt. Lee. He is my cap'n, and there's not a better fighter in the army."

Amherst glanced once at Ned and turned away.

"I say it's a plot, and woe to those who have a hand in it!" he went on. "Cap'n Lee is as good as any man in the army, I care not what sort o' uniform he wears. He's true as steel to the king an'——"

Amherst could not afford to ignore the young fellow any longer, for Ned's earnestness was gathering a crowd, and so he turned full upon him with a stern look.

"Young sir," said Amherst, "your captain has been placed under arrest and must be tried——"

"By a packed court——"

"Silence, sir!" thundered Amherst. "Dare you question a military court established under my eye? By heavens! I'll have you haled to prison with your captain——"

"Just what I would like," broke in Ned. "This is

infamous and I will prove it if you give me half a chance. It is a conspiracy to blight Capt. Lee's fame, for he has enemies right in this camp, but they are cowards all who dare not face him openly."

"He must abide by the decision of the court," said the general.

"He is convicted now," cried Nimble Ned. "If he is ever sentenced Nimble Ned will turn French and fight for the lilies."

"Put that young scamp under arrest!" cried Amherst, his face assuming a crimson hue for very spleen. "I will not have such treasonable language in my camp."

"You cannot bridle Nimble Ned's tongue whatever you do."

"But I can silence it, young sir," roared Amherst. "Let me see if I can't. Put him under arrest, Capt. Walpole, and see that he is properly bucked and gagged till his trial comes off."

Ned drew back and made a show of resistance as the young officer came forward to carry out the orders; he threw up his gun, but as suddenly lowered it and grumblingly submitted.

"Take me to the cap'n," he cried, "and we'll share our insults together. Mebbe they'll give me the same sentence they give him, an' I hope they will."

"I'll approve of the sentence if they do," was Am-

herst's parting shot as Nimble Ned was led away under guard.

In a short time the Guards learned of this second arrest, and soon were on the edge of mutiny.

Vernon and Kenward Mason consulted and finally resolved to abide events while they tried to subdue the feelings of the Young Guardsmen.

In less than three hours after Capt. Lee's arrest, the military court sat on his case.

He maintained a complete silence as to the charges of disobedience, some trifling evidence was offered for the prosecution, and by noon he had been sentenced to be stripped of his sword and epaulets in the presence of the army, at nine o'clock the next day, and furthermore disgraced.

As for Nimble Ned, he was returned to prison to await his trial later on, and Capt. Lee, holding his head high, was marched back to the guardhouse, carrying in his bosom a secret that grated against his inmost soul whenever he thought of it. But it was for the cause—for royal George, and, as he hoped and even believed, for the rescue of Amy and Joanna.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE LION'S DEN.

The reader may imagine the feelings of Capt. Lee who, having sacrificed himself to duty at the behest of his commanding general, found himself once more an inmate of the odious guardhouse, where he was expected to remain until he could be further disgraced the following day.

But Amherst did not intend carrying the sentence of the court-martial into effect.

He was playing a deep game for his king and, as all's fair in war, he thought he was justified in playing it as he did.

That night there was little sleep in the camp of the Young Guardsmen.

They could talk of nothing but the arrest and conviction of Capt. Lee.

It was most infamous in their eyes, and Vernon and Mason were not permitted to visit the condemned officer in his prison.

This only tended to heighten the excitement and, added to it the arrest and imprisonment of Nimble Ned, the turmoil became great.

Straight Tongue counseled forbearance, but this the lads were not constrained to grant, and the old man

was compelled to retire under a fire of exasperating questions.

It was midnight when Lee, in his cramped quarters in the guardhouse, heard voices at the door.

He knew that a sentry was there with a loaded musket on his shoulder, standing guard over him, and while he listened to the low hum of conversation his curiosity became excited.

Presently he heard what he took for a scuffle, and the first thought was that the Guards had come to rescue him by force.

He drew near the door and held his breath.

Suddenly the portal opened.

The sentry lay on the ground gagged, with his musket thrust underneath his bound limbs, and harmless.

Capt. Lee understood all in a moment.

It was in pursuance of the general's plan.

The hour had come for the second part of the strange performance, and he did not hesitate to take notice of it.

Slipping from the dark interior of the guardhouse, he soon found himself in the night air and apparently unwatched.

The lines of the French lay before him.

Not far away loomed the bastions of Louisbourg against the heavens, here and there flecked by clouds, and he could hear the dashing of the surf against the rocks.

What fate was in store for him within those walls he did not know.

It might be life, it might be death, but death, even if it should be that, was not much worse than the disgrace he was bearing in the eyes of the army.

Lee looked carefully around him and made off.

To his left he could see the camp fires of the Guards, and he was almost persuaded to make his way thither and in a moment tell Vernon the truth, but a sense of duty impelled him otherwise.

He would have to wait—wait until the game had been played through, and if he failed he would look to Amherst to clear his record.

It was a dark glide through the underbrush and over the rocks that made up the distance to the walls of the French stronghold.

What would be his reception there?

Would Drucour believe his story?

He carried on his person a copy of the finding of the court-martial.

It cited in the usual way that he had been tried and would in the morning be dismissed from the army for disobedience in the face of the enemy.

Then he had made up a story about the strength of the British army for French ears, and he would be very indignant over his arrest and dismissal.

He was within hearing distance of the fortress when

he almost ran against a living object that seemed to rise from the ground beside him.

He heard a grunt much like that of a disturbed hog, and was about to draw his sword when he looked into the face of an Indian.

"Who dar, brudder?" said the red man.

"A friend, I hope, if you are French," answered Capt. Lee. "Which is the best way to the nearest gate of the fortress?"

The redskin leaned forward, and Lee saw that he was a giant in stature, almost naked to the waist, and that in his leathern belt he carried tomahawk and knife.

"Would the long knife seek the fort?" asked the savage.

"Would I be here if I were not trying to get into Louisbourg?" snapped Lee.

"Let Tall Pole get a look at his friend, the white man."

The Indian came closer and studied Lee's face for a moment in the uncertain light.

"My brudder serve the king of England," he said, after his inspection.

"I did," said Lee. "I serve him no longer."

"How so, brudder?"

"They have disgraced me for bravery. They have tried me, but I have eluded them."

"And my brudder is on the trail to the Frenchman's fort?"

"Yes, yes. Point me the way, Tall Pole, and be very quick about it, for I don't want to be caught here."

Lee fancied he heard sounds of pursuit behind him and the Indian listened as he leaned his supple body forward.

"Come!" he cried, as he caught Lee's hand. "Tall Pole show his white brudder the way into the king's strong house."

Away they went over the rocks, stumbling now and then, but for all that making good headway.

At last the Iroquois halted.

Pointing ahead he said: "The big strong house," and in another moment he had whisked himself out of sight.

Capt. Lee was now alone.

He looked forward and, by straining his eyes, could make out the great bastions of old Louisbourg, and for a moment his brave heart failed him.

"Come," he said to himself. "I am in for it, come weal or woe. I must not fail now."

Pushing forward, he was suddenly stopped by a command to halt, and a soldier loomed between him and a rift in the clouds.

Nothing but a bayonet and a wall separated him from the French.

"By the holy soul of my mother!" cried the French soldier, as he struck a light with his tinder and thrust the flame almost against Lee's cheek. "This is a Brit-

ish soldier in full dress. I say, young sir, you're on dangerous ground."

"Not now, I hope," responded Lee. "I want to see your commander."

"Drucour?"

"Yes."

"He may hang you."

"That is to be seen," smiled Lee. "Come, do you intend keeping me here all night?"

"Not that, but you look so funny to me, coming right into our arms, as it were, that I have to rub my eyes to see if this is not a dream. I never heard of such a case before."

"Call the officer of the guard——"

The sentry broke Lee's sentence by doing what he had suggested.

In an instant a little French captain came running up, and when he caught sight of Capt. Lee he threw himself on the defensive and drew his sword.

"He comes to surrender," said the guard, in French.

"Are the rest coming, too?"

"I cannot say. I do not speak for the whole army."

"Are you tired of the service?"

"I prefer to make my statement to your general."

"Come, then."

The little captain, who looked like a toad in livery, placed himself before Lee and marched gateward with all the pomposity of a major general.

It was all amusing to Lee, and he would probably have laughed aloud but for the dark aspects of his case.

The gate opened at the captain's word, and the next minute the young provincial was within the walls of Louisbourg.

The sight of a British officer in the fortress in full dress did not escape sharp eyes long.

He was seen almost as soon as the gate closed behind him, and before long he was in the midst of a gaping, staring crowd of Frenchies.

But his guardian waved his sword and opened a way through the blue-coated ranks, and at last Lee breathed free again.

"Remember that I want to see Drucour," he said to the pigmy in regimentals.

"*Oui, monsieur,*" was the answer, as the speaker filed suddenly to the left, and presently entered a court beyond which lay the headquarters of the commander-governor of the fortress.

Drucour was asleep.

The inner sentries were stirred up, and while Capt. Lee waited for his excellency, the governor, he was entertained by his escort with a long story of the prowess of the French, and how they expected to send Amherst home with empty honors.

To all this braggadocio our young hero listened with an amused smile, and there is no telling when the story

would have ended had not the door opened and Drucour, *en dishabille*, entered the room.

The French governor had not taken time to complete his toilet, and he cut a sorry figure when he emerged from his private bedroom into the presence of the young Englishman.

Drucour had heard a little something concerning the identity of his late caller, but he was not prepared to see one in the full uniform of the British army, with some decorations which proclaimed his service in the ranks of the provincials.

The Frenchman drew off a little and looked Lee over from head to foot.

"Leave me," he said, to the little captain who lingered in the room for the purpose of being praised for his part of the affair. "I will see you to-morrow, Capt. Bavoire."

The salute was full of ostentation and servility, and in another moment Lee was alone with Drucour.

For a little while the governor-general looked him over again, and then began a fire of questions.

Why had he come? Why did he desert the British? How many men and vessels had the two commanders? Had they landed any of the heavy guns yet? When would they open fire on the fort and would Boscawen attempt to assault on the sea side?

To all of these queries Lee replied with circum-

spection, yet going as far as he could for the purpose of satisfying Drucour.

When at last he drew the finding of the court-martial from his bosom and placed it on the table, a cry of indignation burst from the Frenchman's throat.

"It is infamous!" he cried. "It looks like a plot, monsieur captain."

"It certainly was not fair."

"You have enemies in your camp?"

"Several, your excellency."

"And they are jealous?"

"They must be."

"And dangerous, as this paper shows. Amherst probably listened to them. It is no wonder you fled from the British to the protecting folds of the liliated flag of France."

"A soldier's heart will not bend all the time."

"You are right, monsieur captain," cried Drucour, as he caught Lee's hand. "This is the case the world over. You have come to the right place for protection."

"They may demand me back."

"They shall not have you back so long as the guns of Louisbourg can belch defiance."

"I thank you, Gov. Drucour," and Lee smiled as he spoke. "I feel that I am not friendless even in the camp of those who, a few hours ago, I accounted my

enemies. I trust you will not find me recreant to my new friends."

It was a hard word for Lee to utter, but the occasion demanded it, and Drucour bowed as it fell from his lips.

"I will see to your comfort, monsieur captain," he said, touching the silver bell on the table. "You shall have good quarters and we will get along famously together. You belong to the American contingent, you say?"

"To the Young Guards, recruited under the eye of Col. Washington."

"A brave compatriot!" cried Drucour. "I have heard before of this Col. Washington. He was with your Braddock, I believe."

"He saved the army there."

"Ah, yes. But here is Maj. Delacroix. He will see to your comfort, monsieur captain. Good-night!" and Drucour waved his hand and retired.

CHAPTER IX.

TWO ENCOUNTERS.

What was Capt. Lee's surprise when, the following morning, he saw an Indian watching him curiously as he made his way across the parade ground of the fortress.

This savage took good care, as he thought, not to be observed by the young soldier, but Lee's eyes were keen, and he discovered the espionage with mingled feelings.

Was this Indian one who suspected his mission? Had he entered the fortress after his own escapade in Amherst's camp and did he only await his opportunity to betray him to the French?

Lee resolved to put a bold face on the matter, and sauntered off without apparently taking more than a passing notice of the red.

He soon found that he was an object of general attention.

Drucour had given orders that the young guardsman should be treated with civility, as he had escaped from his own command after a certain indignity heaped upon him by Amherst, and the Frenchman hoped to win an ally for his king.

He rather liked Lee, for he was young and active

and had had experience in border war, and he doubted not that in a short time he would prove quite an acquisition to the service of France.

The young captain watched closely for a glimpse of the fair captives of the fortress, yet he did not care to show himself suddenly to them for fear of exciting them and really betraying himself.

Still the strange Indian watched him, and at last Lee found himself in a position where he could not avoid him.

The redskin suddenly turned away, but with a glance that seemed to tell Lee that he had been recognized, and in another moment the savage, whirling again, stood face to face with him.

"Good-morning, brudder," said the Indian, putting out his hand to Lee. "Did the soldiers of the great king find you on the trail and bring you in?"

There was something in the tones that startled Lee.

"I came to Louisbourg to escape an indignity placed upon me by Gen. Amherst," he answered. "I preferred staying where I was, but I had to flee to save my honor."

The Indian grunted.

"You fight for King Louis now?" he said.

"Not by any means. I am for the English. What Amherst has done does not affect my allegiance to royal George."

"But you save your scalp by coming to the blue-coated soldiers in the great fort?"

"See here," cried Lee, unable to keep back his thoughts longer. "I know you now, Surefoot."

There was a twinkle in the other's eyes and his hand came forward again.

"Hist! I am Darting Arrow," he said, in lower tones. "I came here as another redskin, but Red Fox suggested a change of name, and I thought it best. Why that Indian befriended me I do not know, but he had an object in view. He seldom helps anyone white or half so, like myself. I have heard something of your arrest."

"Yes, perhaps. I find that it is all over the fortress already. What about the girls?"

"They are here."

"You have seen them?"

"Yes."

"And talked with them?"

"Not quite that far yet. They have seen me, but they think I am an Indian, for don't I look like a darling red in my gewgaws and war paint?"

"You make a capital savage, Sure—Darting Arrow. But if they should discover you, I fancy that your scalp would adorn some Indian's belt in a jiffy."

"We take such chances," grinned Surefoot. "We've got to take 'em in my business. But why did you disobey orders?"

Lee gave the old scout a look which he seemed to understand, for he made a quick gesture.

"I see," he said. "It's a little game of yours, too."

"Not so much mine as the general's."

"But they won't give you a good name in camp."

"Not for the present. They think that Capt. George Lee really flinched in battle, and they are cursing me over yonder at a merry rate—all but the Guards, of course."

"If you fail and lose your head here, no one will ever clear your name."

"I've left that to Amherst. I have his promise."

"Which is not much. I know the general. You can't always depend on the promises of these lords and highborn gentlemen."

"I know that," said Lee. "But it was for the cause, and the general thought it the best way to get certain information. That is why I am in Louisbourg."

"Well, we'll have to put up with it, but——"

"The girls," interrupted Lee.

Surefoot turned halfway round and, seeing Amy and Joanna emerging upon the parade ground, wheeled squarely and walked away.

Lee's uniform was so different from any in sight that the moment the young ladies caught sight of him they drew back and looked with astonishment upon him.

"It is Capt. Lee, and in uniform!" cried Amy, as she clutched Joanna's arm. "He has been taken prisoner."

Thereupon they threw a quick glance around and came forward.

Lee received them with manifestations of delight, and they did not hide their surprise.

"When did they capture you?" asked Amy.

"I was not captured," said Lee, who knew that the accepted story of his coming would soon reach their ears whether he told it first or not. "I came into Louisbourg last night because I had to."

"What's that? You have not——"

"I was arrested in the camp over yonder for alleged disobedience of orders in battle and would have been stripped of my rank this morning and disgraced before the whole army had I not broken guard last night and made my way hither."

Color left Amy Randolph's cheeks, and in an instant they were white.

"What is this I hear, Capt. Lee!" she exclaimed. "You disobey orders in the face of the enemy?"

"The court-martial found me guilty."

"But you are not guilty, captain?" put in Joanna.

"The evidence as presented to the court seemed overwhelming," answered Lee.

"But why did you disobey?"

It was Amy speaking again.

"I cannot explain now. We may be watched by some inquisitive people and——"

"I cannot believe all this, Capt. Lee," she went on.

"It sets my head in a whirl. We are the prisoners of Drucour, and he will not let us go. We were carried through the forest for miles until we were finally set down under the flag of the French monarch. Though we are well treated, it is irksome to be so far from our friends."

"And wanted to be kissed by the French officers," smiled Joanna.

"Which might suit you, Mistress Joanna," said Lee.

But Straight Tongue's daughter pursed her pretty brown lips and her eyes flashed.

"Ah! so you've made no conquests, then?"

"Why should we?" cried Amy. "This is not old Williamsburg, with its pretty streets and fine drives. It is not the capital of Virginia, but a bleak place on a bleak coast, where one is never out of sound of the roaring surf."

"I trust your captivity here may not last much longer," sympathetically replied Lee.

"It will last until the French give up the fortress."

"Which may be sooner than you think."

"Then your heart is still with England?"

"As it shall ever be!" cried Lee, and then, unable to keep back the truth longer, he told the fair prisoners the whole story of his game.

Both girls listened with astonishment, and at the conclusion they said they feared for his safety.

"If you are betrayed?" said Amy.

"A soldier should know nothing but duty."

"You will be watched, for the French are very suspicious."

"As they should be, for these are dangerous times."

"I have noticed a strange Indian, who has regarded us differently from the other savages. Methinks he left you just before we came up."

"I did meet an Indian. I could not avoid him, and thought it best to be as cordial as I could, under the circumstances. It was Darting Arrow of the Iroquois."

"I hate these redskins!" said Joanna, with a shudder of aversion. "They have sold themselves, their hatchets and all, to the French king, and know nothing but blind obedience to their monarch. They bring in the scalps of women and children, and dance round the camp fires with them in their belts like a lot of demons let loose from below."

"We have Indians with us," said Lee. "Between the French and the British Indian, when it comes to savage instincts, there is really little difference."

"I fear you are right," said Amy. "But let us not keep you here too long. It may excite suspicion."

"That is right. We will hope for the best. Do not avoid Darting Arrow if he should care to address you."

"What! that Indian?"

"Yes, there may be an ally in Darting Arrow, though he wears the war paint of the Iroquois."

Thinking that the interview, for the first one, had lasted long enough, Lee separated from the captives and walked in another direction.

"He has placed his neck in the halter," said Amy, when she found herself out of hearing distance from anyone but Joanna.

"But it was a brave move, sister. Capt. Lee is full of duty, and when his general spoke, it was for him to obey."

"That is true, but should he fail—should he fail, I say, and Gen. Amherst not survive this campaign—who will arise to clear the skirts of the young captain and our friend?"

Joanna was silent.

"Let us hope that he will not fail, but the chances are against him," was the response. "My heart is filled with forebodings, but we must look circumstances squarely in the face and not repine, for, after all, the darkest cloud that hangs above us may have a lining of silver."

Joanna hoped so; simple as she was, she could look forward to a brighter future than the one that lay before them, and when she looked at the fair Amy, she saw a tear glistening on her pale cheek.

"Ah! young ladies," said a voice at this moment, and the girls looked into the face of Drucour, the commandant.

He was faultlessly attired in his rich uniform trimmed with gold laces and decorations, and he had doffed his three-cornered hat with its red plume till the scarlet feather nearly touched the ground.

"Good-morning, commandant," smiled Amy, as she courtesied. "We hope you slept well last night."

"Not so well as I should have wished," replied Drucour. "I was courting Morpheus in fine and gallant shape when I was roused from my slumbers to meet a young Briton who had just entered our lines. It is so seldom that we get a recruit from King George's army that I thought it best to give him immediate audience."

"Indeed!" cried Amy, deceptively. "You got a recruit from King George, then?"

"Yes, one Capt. Lee, of the Virginia Guards. He flinched in the late fight and Amherst cashiered the young fellow. He was so badly rattled and incensed over his treatment that he deserted last night and is now with us. I hope to enroll him in one of the regiments to-morrow, though I have not yet determined just where to put him. He seems a likely young officer, who no doubt grew tired of the king's service and resolved to serve a better and kinder master."

The flush that had stolen to Amy Randolph's cheeks deepened while Drucour spoke, and, but for a pinch from Joanna, who was watching her closely, she might have answered in a manner which would have betrayed her real feelings.

"When will the fighting begin?" asked Amy, turning the conversation into another channel.

"Within a few days. Capt. Lee tells me that the enemy is landing his heavy guns, and these will have to be planted nearer the fortress and——"

"You think you will be able to repulse the attack?"

"We shall annihilate the redcoats!" exclaimed Drucour, in the fervor of his feelings. "They will never see the inside of Louisbourg save as prisoners of war, and I hope to send Boscawen's vessels to the bottom. You do not wish me this good luck, fair ones, but I understand your feelings. Were Drucour in your situation, he would be English, too."

CHAPTER X.

THE MESSAGE THAT FAILED TO GET OFF.

Nimble Ned did not like his confinement in the guardhouse.

He had been sent there for "talking up," as he said, to Gen. Amherst, and the imprisonment did not tend to give him a better opinion of that officer.

"If I can get out of this safely," said he, as he paced the cramped limits of the place which had been erected after the landing of the army, "I will give Gen. Amherst another bit of my mind, but not in the way I did before. That he should arrest Capt. Lee and charge him with a whole rigmarole of stuff which was not true is pretty tough. Why, there's more bravery in Lee's heart in a minute than this big be-puffed and be-spangled general will ever know. Why can't I get out? Dick Parsons and his tool, Chip, whom I met on shipboard, will plot and counterplot in the camp, and the first they know they will have all the knowledge of our forces and so on in the French fort."

The night had settled down around the youth in the guardhouse.

He did not know that Lee had just effected his escape and was then on his way to other dangers and adventures under the French flag.

Nimble Ned had been thrown into the place with scant ceremony, for the escort was composed of a lot of brutal English, who did not like the provincials.

He had examined the inside of his door, but found it unyielding, and for the first time in his life he gave way to despair.

"Where's Straight Tongue?" he cried. "He would help me if he understood the situation, and Surefoot would join in. But I guess I am left to take care of myself."

He threw himself upon the scanty pallet at last, and buried his face in his hands.

There he lay for some time, oblivious to the sounds outside and cursing the fate that had followed the sudden unloosing of his tongue.

All at once he sprang up as if a thought had flashed through his mind.

"I never thought of the roof!" he cried. "Why haven't I tried it just once?"

In the darkness he seemed to have the eyes of an owl, for he soon found the rough rafters of the guard-house and was climbing along one with the agility of a squirrel.

At the peak of the roof Nimble Ned stopped and tried the sheeting.

It was not very secure, as his first examination proved, and in less than ten minutes, to his glee and

surprise. he had pushed one of the clapboards aside and saw the stars far overhead.

"It's a good deal easier than I thought," he chuckled. "It takes a pretty strong place to hold Ned Halpine, for he is used to guardhouses. Now, Gen. Amherst, you will soon be minus a prisoner, if I can get through this opening."

He drew his lithe body up and wriggled through the opening he had made, stopping for a time on the roof to listen.

The guard beneath him seemed not to have heard the slight noises he had made in getting out.

Ned smiled to himself when he leaned over the tip of the roof and caught a glimpse of the sentry as he leaned against a tree in front of the structure, but some feet from the door.

In another moment the young soldier had crept to the further end of the guardhouse, and then he dropped to the ground with the nimbleness of a cat.

"Now, sir," he cried, "I'll see what I can do for Capt. Lee."

Ned made his way to the more important guardhouse, where he knew Capt. Lee was expected to be found.

"What's the matter with the door—it's open!" he exclaimed.

Sure enough the door of the guardhouse stood well ajar, and Ned was puzzled.

"He's escaped, but where can he go?" he cried. "He dare not remain here, for he will be recaptured in the morning and the sentence will be carried out. He would surely not try to get back to Virginia through the woods. Would he go to the fort and tell Drucour, the Frenchman, all about our army? No, Capt. Lee is no traitor. He is for the king—for our king, I mean, and——"

A slight noise behind him startled Nimble Ned, and he cast his eyes in that direction.

Not far away stood a dark figure against a tree, and the hands of the young soldier clinched as he regarded it.

"Watchin' me, eh?" he ejaculated, underneath his breath. "I won't stand this."

He moved toward the object, but it suddenly bounded away, and Ned paused.

"A spy of some sort," he said. "Ah! if I had got my hands underneath his windpipe—they took my weapons from me when they put me in the guard-house—I would have shown him a trick or two."

Nimble Ned thought at first of making his way to the camp of the Young Guardsmen and acquainting them with the mystery of Capt. Lee's disappearance, but he suddenly changed his mind and went in another direction.

"I hope I won't run across Amherst," he thought. "I don't care to meet that swaggering man, who thinks

the whole future of his country rests on his shoulders. I would sooner meet Capt. George, but that is out of the question to-night."

Ned kept out of the light of the camp fires as much as possible, not wishing to be seen by anyone.

Withdrawing to the edge of the camp, where he could make up his mind what to do, he soon reached a dark line of trees, underneath one of which he sat down.

Though it was June, a strong wind, which had swept in from the cove, blew in his face.

He could hear sounds which told him that the camp was not altogether asleep, and now and then the challenges of the guards reached his ears.

Nimble Ned was perplexed.

He wanted time and seclusion to draw out his ideas and tell him what to do.

With Capt. Lee of the Guards missing—what had become of him he could not imagine—and himself liable to be picked up again and remanded for punishment, the hour did not present many bright spots for Ned Halpine.

Surrounded by the soldiers of King George, whom he had served, though sometimes with a protest, for liberty even then was struggling in his bosom, he did not care to present himself at any camp fire, for Amherst was all-powerful, and for him to be seen meant, in his mind, a return to the obnoxious guardhouse.

Nimble Ned, weaponless for the first time in many months, sat under the spreading boughs of the tree and gave himself up to serious reflection.

Presently he heard something crawling through the forest.

It stopped every now and then, like an animal, but, accustomed as he was to the secrets of the forest, he soon decided that the strange crawler had but two legs.

Rich in woodcraft, Nimble Ned listened with a smile gathering at his lips to the crawl in the dark.

Here and there the starlight sifted through the trees and lighted a spot, but, for the most part, where he was the gloom was almost impenetrable.

At last the crawler stopped, and Ned hugged the tree a little closer.

That an Indian was almost within arm's reach of him he was now convinced; but friend or foe was the question.

If the redskin was one of Amherst's red allies, why would he be creeping like a serpent through the wood at the edge of the camp?

Why not stalking boldly forward with his eyes on the alert and not bellying the ground like a sneaking snake of the rocks?

Nimble Ned held his breath.

He could nearly make out the figure that he imagined was hugging the ground a few feet away.

All at once a grunt assailed his ears.

Then the cry of a young night-hawk smote upon his hearing, and Ned understood.

The Indian had sent out a signal and it had been answered.

In another moment something rose from the ground and stood erect.

The starlight touched this statue in the wood, and Ned looked upon the figure of a savage, tall and well built, with his hand upon the handle of the tomahawk in his belt.

He could almost have put out his hand and touched the redskin.

But the boy hugged the tree, which was a good shelter, and saw nothing but the scarlet hunter a few feet away.

The strange call of the young hawk came again to his ears; the Indian answered it.

"Some deviltry afoot," thought Ned. "It's good, p'raps, that I got out of the guardhouse."

The Indian stood for some time motionless under the trees, and then slightly turned his head.

This gave Ned an opportunity to slip behind the tree without noise, and he embraced it.

Footsteps came from the left, where the pretended night-hawk had sounded his cry, and then two figures joined in the forest.

"You're here, I see," said a voice, in English.

"Night Cloud is here."

"Well, so am I. Now, Night Cloud, when can you go to the fort?"

"When my white brother tells all he knows."

"I've written it down."

"On the talking paper?"

"Yes. Here is the paper. Put it where you won't lose it and, mind you, if the English catch you, you must swallow it before you are seen to have it in your possession. It talks much for the Frenchman in the fortress."

"For Drucour, the brave old fighter? Ah! Night Cloud will not fail."

"It's ticklish business, playing this double game," said the one in English. "I played it all the way here on the ship, and nearly lost my life there."

"My white friend must look out. The English have keen eyes."

"Some of them have and others are as dumb as sheep," laughed the other. "I have heard Amherst and his council of war, and when you reach the fortress Drucour will know what was done there."

"By the talking paper?"

"Yes. For Heaven's sake, don't lose it."

"Night Cloud would as soon lose his scalp."

"Now let us both get away from here. You go your way and I'll go mine. Tell Drucour that Dick Parsons knows what he's about and that he will call on

him some day for some of the gold crowns in the headquarters chest. Can you remember that?"

"Night Cloud not forget, brother."

One of the speakers slipped away. It was Dick Parsons.

The Indian remained in his tracks.

Nimble Ned's keen eyes saw his dark hands fumbling at his belt, and knew that he was concealing the message behind it.

With beating heart, but a ready brain, the youth of the Guards watched and waited.

He measured the Indian from head to foot.

Not ten feet separated them.

Nimble Ned beat down his heart throbs and felt his youthful muscles grow as hard as iron.

If that message should reach Drucour it might mean disaster for the English. He did not think of Amherst then; he thought only of the army and royal George.

Suddenly something shot out from behind the tree.

It was human in shape, but it had the spring of a wild beast, leaping from its lair upon some prey.

Nimble Ned struck the Indian in the middle, doubling him up in a flash and throwing him back.

At the same time the right hand of the young ranger seized the hatchet in the buckskin belt, jerked it out and, as the savage attempted to break from the lad's hold, the keen-edged weapon was buried in his brain!

It was the work of a moment, and but for the fact that the Indian had been taken unawares, it might not have met with such success.

Ned stood over his prostrate victim with the gory hatchet in his hand.

Sounds of laughter and song came from the camp; he heard the surf plainer than ever, but he saw nothing but the savage dead on the ground.

Suddenly he stooped and fumbled for the message. He drew it forth and thrust it into his own bosom, the "talking paper" intended for Drucour.

"Now," said he, "I hide this body, and to-morrow I'll throw the message into Amherst's face."

Ten minutes later the young private of the Guards was slipping toward the camp, where he threw himself down upon the ground and fell asleep.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRAWL.

Now that Capt. Lee was inside the old fortress, he discovered that he was in a perilous place.

Regarded with suspicion by one-half the French officers who did not seem to share with their commandant the opinion he held as to Lee's story, Capt. George, of the Guards, was granted scant courtesy by the bluecoats.

However, he seemed to have found a friend in Dru-cour, but he did not know how soon that friendship might be broken.

Meanwhile Amherst went on with his preparations to attack the fortress ; he dragged his great siege guns from the ships and planted them where he hoped to make them tell against the walls.

But he did not intend to open the attack before he heard from Capt. Lee.

Surefoot saw a good deal of the young guardsman as he went hither and thither in the fortress, commingling as much as he could with the enemy and picking up a good deal of valuable information.

In the town there were many drinking houses at which, nightly, gathered the soldiers of the line and

the officers in their brilliant uniforms, and, now and then, a mixture of Indians.

France had long coquetted with the "red devils" of the forest, and had trained them to serve the king with a lavish outlay of golden crowns.

Red Fox, one of the most celebrated of the younger chieftains, had done much to bring about the friendship that existed between the two races, and his work had been paid for and appreciated.

The third night after Capt. Lee's entrance into the fortress, he turned into one of the shop-lined streets of the town, when he heard loud voices proceeding from one of these drinking dens.

Intending to avoid it, he bent his steps a little faster, but a voice which he recognized fell upon his ear.

In another instant he had crossed the narrow street and was at the open door of the brawling room.

In the middle of the floor, dressed in all the paraphernalia of the wartrail, stood Red Fox.

The lamps that hung against the walls threw their grotesque light upon his handsome figure, and, as Capt. Lee halted at the portal, he heard the redskin shout:

"My great brother, the French king, will eat the English up as the bear eats the honey. He is all powerful on land and sea and the mighty ships of the enemy will sink when he waves his iron hand. He tells his red warriors to go into the forest and scalp his enemies, and they go. When they come back the hair

of the maidens of the English hangs at the belts of the warriors and the French generals pay for each lock in yellow money."

There was a loud shout at this from a lot of Indians across the room, but a young French officer, with more disgust than discretion, railed out against such language.

"It is a shame!" cried he. "We should get along without this sort of work. We should not make war on women and children and the king should dismiss every red murderer he has employed."

"None of that sort of talk here, Decroix," admonished an older soldier, as he laid his hand upon the other's shoulder. "We must sanction the actions of our superiors."

"By the soul of St. Louis! I will not," was the reply. "I have some manhood left, and I did not come over to this wilderness to fight alongside of a lot of scarlet butchers."

By this time Red Fox had gotten the purport of the young officer's protest through his head, and he turned upon him like an insulted lion.

"What says my white brother?" he demanded.

"I am not afraid to repeat it," shouted Decroix. "I say I did not cross the sea to serve with a lot of red butchers. War is cruel at all times, but when we take the lives of the innocent it becomes the devil's work."

"Then let my white brother give his sword to the white squaws, who will fight with it for King Louis."

Decroix paled and his gray eyes flashed.

"It was a bloody day when Louis entered into his infernal compact with the tribes," he cried. "I have never sanctioned it, and by heavens! the blade of Decroix would be the first to help drive the pretended allies, the red demons of the forest, into eternal exile."

"My white brother should go over to the English."

"I serve my king—you the demon blood!" was the reply.

"Red Fox fears not the tongue of the boaster. He is greater than the young white man-squaw, who will run into the sea when the great guns of the English open on the fortress."

Decroix's sword leaped as if by magic from its scabbard and he cleared a spot before him with its shining point.

The young Iroquois drew his hatchet and the other Indians laid their hands on their half-concealed weapons.

Drucour certainly had a lot of tigers in Louisbourg.

Capt. Lee heard and saw all this from the door of the den.

It was the voice of Red Fox that had attracted him, for he had met the chief during a truce on the southern frontier, and now heard it after some months.

He might, perhaps should, have turned away, but

the prospects for a fight held him at the door, and he longed to see the sword of Decroix spit the young fiend of the forest.

Some of the other officers were eager to see a duel, while a few would have prevented it; but the latter were too scant in numbers.

"Let the white squaw-soldier eat his hot words," cried Red Fox. "Let him take off his blue clothes and give them to one of the white girl captives of the fortress."

"You would insult Mistress Randolph!" cried Decroix. "A fairer and purer lady never passed before your vision. But for you, I am told, she would not be here now in danger of death from the guns of her friends, for you and your prowling wolves of the night fell upon her escort and murdered all in cold blood but she and her companion."

"When did the white squaw-man become the champion of the pale flower?" asked Red Fox, sarcastically.

"From the moment that I saw her innocent face."

"Then let him give her his sword while he creeps through the forest like a coward."

This was too much for the hot blood of the young Gaul.

"Defend yourself," he cried to Red Fox, as he swept his sword before the face of the Iroquois. "A dog's a dog, wherever you find him; and he always howls for his master."

The other Indians now began to push the Frenchman aside, the young officers laid their hands on their weapons, and for a moment the calm preceded the storm.

Then some one pushed a Frenchman forward, a young buck seized him and threw him against the wall, and the fight was on.

In another moment the interior of the drinking den was a brawling mob, with red and white mixed indiscriminately together; blows were dealt right and left, and cursings rose above the din of it all.

Capt. Lee saw an Indian seize Decroix by the throat and drag him from Red Fox, with whom he had clinched, and the next moment he darted, sword in hand, across the doorstep.

No one seemed to see him, so great was the turmoil and so terrible the fighting in the room.

Lee hardly knew how he reached the main combatants.

He had a grudge against the Indian who had brought Amy and Joanna to Louisbourg, and he longed to settle old scores with him.

Straight at Red Fox dashed the young Virginian.

But he had to throw two other redskins aside before he reached his enemy, with whom Decroix was renewing his scuffle.

"At last, robber of the woods!" cried Lee, as he seized Red Fox by the shoulder and spun him round.

"You have deserved death a thousand times, and you shall have it now!"

Some one caught Lee and tried to throw him back, but he was not to be deterred.

He saw nothing but the scourge of the frontiers, heard nothing but the shrieks of the innocent falling before the hatchet of the Iroquois.

Lee's sword was partly wrested from his hand, but he recovered it, and the next moment had pressed Red Fox against the wall with the point of the blade at his naked breast.

Never before had such a frenzy seized the young guardsman.

He thought of nothing but death to the red enemy.

Red Fox could not retreat; he was at the mercy of the lad's blade, and the flash that filled Capt. Lee's eyes must have told him that mercy just then was not one of his attributes.

"Die, fiend of the wartrail!" hissed Lee. "Perish for the countless crimes of the frontiers!"

He felt his blood rushing through his veins like a lava current.

In another second the career of the young Iroquois would have terminated had not a hand, in a grip of iron, fallen upon Lee's wrist.

"No! Not now!" said a voice at his ear, as he was pushed back by a strength superior to his own.

He glanced to the left and saw the painted face of Surefoot.

"Let me finish him!" cried Lee, as he tried to wrench himself from the half-breed's grasp. "I have him where I may never have this devil again—at my sword's point."

"No, not now. Remember your mission."

Ah, his mission! Capt. Lee had forgotten that.

In the fury of the fight and the hot desire for vengeance he had forgotten his compact with Amherst and everything else.

But even then he would have thrown all to the winds to have buried his sword in the bosom of this fiend incarnate.

"Let him go," continued Surefoot—"for this time, at least."

Just then Red Fox slipped down the wall, turned with a bitter chuckle and vanished.

"You saved him," said Lee. "I would have saved an hundred lives had you let me alone."

"Come," said Surefoot. "This is no place for you." And he caught Lee and dragged him to the door. "Let them have it out if they will, and—— Drucour, by all that's holy!"

In the doorway, his eyes blazing with the excitement of the moment, stood the governor of the fortress.

Some one had told him of the brawl, and, springing

from the card table, he had snatched up his weapons and rushed to the scene.

He looked like a lion as he glanced over the crowd, a weapon in each hand, his face as pale as his white cuffs.

"To quarters, every mother's son of you!" he cried. "Go this instant, or, by the soul of the saints, I will stand you on the ramparts for targets for the enemy's guns!"

He was in the room, and the pistols covered some of the ashamed and cowering officers.

"Where's Red Fox?" he went on. "Ah! here he is! Call off your dogs. Whip them back to their bones, or I'll send you all into the forest yet to-night!"

Red Fox stood like a statue before the commandant.

"My white brother can send the red men off now," he said, coolly. "He can send them back to the trails, but they are liable to stop in the camp out yonder."

"False and threatening!" was the answer. "Had I it all my way, not one of you would ever have been arrayed under the flag of my king. Who started this infamous brawl?"

"That man," cried Decroix, who was nursing a wound in his head. "He boasted of the murder of women and children, and I took it up, your excellency."

"By heavens! I'll promote you, Decroix!" cried Drucour. "As for you"—he turned once more to Red Fox—"take off your red dogs; and know, sir, that,

while you are a brute, we are civilized. Get you gone, all of you—white and red—and let me hear no more of this.”

The room was cleared as if by magic.

“You’ve earned the eternal enmity of that redskin,” said Surefoot to Capt. Lee, as they walked away.

“Better that than his vacillating friendship,” said Lee. “Ah, Surefoot, I would throw up my commission with pleasure if you had just left me to my work a second longer. I would have pinned the heart of that scarlet demon to the wall!”

“And lost your own,” was the answer. “Remember we are in Louisbourg, and not in Amherst’s camp.”

“Which is the better for me, as God knows,” said Lee, with a look into the painted face above his. “You’ve seen the girls?”

“Yes; they know why I am here, and they are ready.”

“For escape?”

“Yes. We must mature our plans before the fight opens, for after that it may be too late.”

“Then to my quarters, and we will lay the plans to-night.”

“Good! We are surrounded by enemies here.”

“I did not know Drucour had such authority over the savages.”

“They fear the Frenchman, for he is stern and merci-

less ; but he does not approve of the massacres of the wildwood. Drucour is a gentleman, but he never for a moment forgets that he is a soldier of France."

Five minutes later the two friends were in Capt. Lee's quarters, and the fortress seemed quiet.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FLASH OF A PISTOL.

Capt. Lee was right when he said that he probably had not heard the last of Red Fox—at least, he hoped he had not.

The vengeance of that young tiger of the wilderness was past human comprehension; he had gathered round him a lot of braves of his own ilk—men who had no mercy, and whose lives had been spent, tomahawk in hand, along the unprotected frontiers.

When he discovered that the coming of Surefoot, whom he knew as Darting Arrow, and Drucour had saved his life, he drew off sullen and discontented.

It was not his intention to quit the fort, as many a hot-headed warrior would have done. He resolved to remain and carry out one of the most diabolical schemes of his life.

Half an hour after the brawl, in the drinking room of La Herne, as the place was called, Red Fox turned up in another part of the town.

On one of the streets not far from the king's bastion stood a large stone house, two story and gabled.

Its roof rose above the ramparts and looked out upon the sea where the waves, under the breath of a gathering storm, lashed themselves into fury.

Drawing back, Red Fox stood in the shadows, and for a time looked at the old structure.

He knew that it had been allotted to the young captives of the fortress, and that Drucour had caused it to be set apart for their comfort.

More than once had he watched Amy and Joanna as they promenaded at even along the bastions or through the town; and, no doubt, he regretted, since they had received such attentions from the young officers, that he had spared them when he massacred their escort.

Now he had formed the plot of his life.

In one of the upper windows, which, he doubted not, was the boudoir of the young ladies, burned a light.

Red Fox watched it for some time, remaining in the shadows like a statue, his fingers now and then stealing toward his hatchet.

"The young white captain knows the fair birds," he said to himself. "The next thing, he will buy them of Drucour, and Red Fox's prisoners will go free."

This was the very thing he wanted to prevent.

At last he crossed the street and vanished among the shadows of the old house itself.

The young Iroquois slipped into the court in front of the house and edged his way into the entrance. A huge, old-fashioned door, heavily strapped with iron, did not bar his progress long, for it was not locked,

as one of the servants allotted to the girls was still out and would not return before midnight.

The human wolf thus got into the house.

Finding the stairway, partly by feeling and partly by his keen eyes, Red Fox crept up it with the slyness of the practiced murderer.

He reached the upper floor, and found himself in a long corridor which ran almost the whole length of the house.

It was not wide, for he could have touched its walls by putting out both arms; but he only put out one and felt the wall on his right.

Not a word fell from his lips now.

He glided down the hall until he came to a spot where a ray of light lay on the floor.

It came from underneath the door near by, and told him that he was at the nest of the birds he sought.

Putting up his hatchet for the first time, Red Fox knocked at the portal.

For a moment silence followed the knock, then he heard voices beyond the portal and footsteps approached it.

A key turned in the lock, but the door did not open.

"Is that you, Celeste?" asked a voice from within.

The crafty Indian imitated a woman's voice, and answered in a manner that caused the door to spring ajar.

The next moment Amy Randolph fell back with a

cry on her lips, for the young lion of the Iroquois stood before her.

Stepping boldly into the room and drawing from the lips of Joanna an echo of Amy's exclamation, the Indian stopped and coolly folded his arms on his naked bosom.

The two girls fell back to the further wall and tremblingly looked at the startling apparition.

For a few seconds Red Fox gloated over his triumph with the mien of a mad eagle with the lamb in its talons.

"What want you here?" said Amy, at last.

"You know the chief of the Iroquois."

"Can we ever blot from our memory the scene in the forest, when you took us from our escort?"

"Red Fox would not have the white birds forget. He would have them remember that the young chief of the Iroquois is the terror of the warpath."

"We promise you that we will remember that. But why are you here? We did not send for you."

"Red Fox comes without being sent for, white bird. He is here for a purpose. You would escape from the French?"

"Yes, yes—but with our friends," cried Amy.

"You will not trust Red Fox, then?"

"We dare not," and the fair girl shuddered as again the massacre came back to her.

"Why might not Red Fox be your friend?" he asked, with a malicious grin.

"We appealed to you that night in the forest to spare the lives of our escort, but you did not listen."

"They were fighting, or would have fought, against the King of France."

Amy did not answer.

"What say you, my darker bird?" asked Red Fox, and he turned suddenly upon Joanna. "Your face is almost like the faces of some of the Iroquois maidens."

"But my blood is not like theirs," exclaimed the child of Straight Tongue.

"Your blood is half white," sneered Red Fox.

The girl darted forward a step, with fire in her eyes.

"It is better than the blood in your veins!" she exclaimed. "Your blood came from the heart of the lion that seeks the blood of his kith and kin and——"

"Hush, Joanna," cried Amy. "Do not irritate the chief; you only incense him against us."

"Let the dark bird chirp," he cried. "She will soon cease forever."

His words brought the first real foreboding of danger to Amy's heart.

Joanna ceased, and crept back to her friend.

"Come," said the Iroquois; "you are going away."

"Not with you," said Mistress Randolph. "When we go away, it shall be with those whom we can trust."

"Can you not trust Red Fox?"

"Why should we, after what we have seen of you?"

The lips of the Indian seemed to meet in silent determination.

"Red Fox has come for the two birds in the Frenchman's cage."

"Have you papers from Gov. Drucour?"

"The great captain in white and red does not send Red Fox on his missions. The war tiger of the Iroquois is his own master, and no one dare question him."

"Whither would you conduct us?" asked Amy. "Not beyond the fortress, for we are the captives of the French, and you serve the same king for whom Drucour draws his sword."

"Red Fox serves no one but the Great Manitou," cried the Indian, smiting his bosom.

He took a step further; the two girls shrank back until they could go no further, for the solid wall barred their progress.

Like doomed birds before the serpent they looked into the glittering orbs of the Indian.

He came on with the stealthy approach of the snake, his moccasined feet gliding noiselessly over the floor and his hands half open, ready to open a little further and then close on his prey.

"You must come with Red Fox," he said, half under his breath. "You must come with him, my birds."

Just then the hand of Joanna fell against the drawer of their dresser.

With a sudden impulse she pulled it open and her hand dropped into it.

Red Fox saw what she took out.

Yes, the keen, searching eyes of the Iroquois caught sight of the pistol which Drucour had thrust upon them a few days before, saying that it might stand them in good stead during the siege if the Indians became unruly.

Her fingers wrapped themselves round the silvered butt of the weapon with eagerness.

As she looked at Amy the barrel of the weapon touched her hand and thrilled her.

Red Fox seemed to hesitate.

"The dark bird would shoot Red Fox?" he laughed.

Joanna said nothing in reply, but only looked and smiled.

"Does the little bird not know that for every drop of Red Fox's blood she sheds an hundred warriors would spring upon her trail? What has the father of the little bird taught her?"

"First of all, to defend myself!" cried Joanna. "My father always taught me this, and I know how to use the weapons he used to place in my hands. I can shoot as well as my sister, Karana, and we have often shot at a mark in the forest."

"But the dark bird must not shoot Red Fox."

"Then you must not touch us."

There was defiance in the depths of Joanna's eyes,

and she no longer appeared to fear the Indian in the room.

"You must come," suddenly cried Red Fox, as he stamped on the floor. "No white girl shall balk the war chief of the Iroquois! Red Fox has never been foiled."

Amy pressed closer to Joanna, and the two girls, in the light of the old lamp that sat on a huge bracket overhead, showered its weird light upon the scene.

One might have heard one's heart after the last words of the young Iroquois.

It was a tableau striking enough for the canvas of some famous limner.

Joanna's hand did not tremble now. She kept the pistol in full view while she returned the look of the Indian with interest.

Back and forth swung the pendulum of hope and fear.

Suddenly from below came a shout that penetrated to the remotest corners of the old house.

"The English! The English!"

Red Fox heard, but did not even turn his head.

Perhaps he knew that Amherst was not expected to open on the fortress for some days—therefore it must be a false alarm.

The girls heard and partially turned their heads.

"The English!" was repeated down below. "The English are marching on the fort!"

Red Fox smiled.

"The cowards are crying out in their fear," he said to the girls. "The long knives are far in the forest. They have not come for the captive birds in the great fort."

The cries died out as rapidly as they had been uttered.

And with them went the hopes they had raised in the bosoms of the two fair friends.

"It is time!" cried Red Fox. "The tiger of the Iroquois will wait no longer. Let the little dark bird throw down her weapon. It was not made to kill Red Fox."

Instead Joanna threw up the pistol, and the Indian, on the eve of a leap forward, fell back.

"I'll shoot as Straight Tongue always taught me," came over the shining barrel.

"If you fire you will not live a minute!" hissed the Indian.

But Joanna, pressing close to Amy's side, glanced once more at her friend, and seemed to thrust the pistol almost into the very face of scarlet before her.

Amy held her breath; she saw the look that had come into Joanna's eyes, she noted the flashing orbs beside her, and——

The room was filled with a sudden report; the smoke, spreading above the weapon, hid the demoniac face of

the Iroquois, and then from out that murky covering came a cry and a heavy fall.

The two girls for a moment clung to one another in the fright of their lives.

Each felt and heard the beatings of the other's heart.

Something was writhing on the floor below the line of smoke—something was surely twisting there; and at last, as the vapor lifted and they looked, they drew back again with cries.

At the threshold lay the body of Red Fox, his hatchet clutched in one hand and his face distorted like a dying fiend's.

Amy, strange to say, was the first to recover. She clutched Joanna's arm and cried out:

"Come, sister, come!" And they sprang forward, leaping over the prostrate body as they darted from the chamber.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITTLE ANDRE'S WARNING.

The outcry of alarm was a false one.

Amherst had not prepared his guns for the siege that was to fall upon Louisbourg, and his men, resting in their camps, were dreaming of the loved ones they had left afar.

Amy and Joanna, springing over the body of the young Iroquois, fled down the corridor and out into the old town.

The brawlers had gone to their huts or the fortifications, and for a while the interior of the place was still.

Fearing to go back until they had found a friend, the fair captives wandered hither and thither until a hand was laid on Amy's sleeve.

The girls looked into the face of Surefoot.

"This is a pretty time to be out in Louisbourg," said the half-breed. "By my life! you must have been to one of the parties they are giving to-night in honor of some saint."

"We have fled from a horror," answered Amy Randolph. "We have killed Red Fox."

"What! killed that red butcher!" cried Surefoot. "Then you've done the Lord a service; but——"

"Come with us and see," said Joanna. "I shot him

with the commandant's pistol, and we left him dead where he fell."

Surefoot, still arrayed in his savage garb, followed the young captives back to the scene of the encounter, and Joanna, leading the way, showed the half-breed to the place.

"It was here," said the girl, stopping suddenly and staring at the floor at the entrance to the little room. "He dropped here, and we sprang over his body in our flight."

"But he's not here now," said Surefoot. "I don't see any Injun. You must have winged him merely."

"But he fell," was the answer. "I fired straight at his red face, and Straight Tongue taught me not to miss a mark at that short distance."

"Well, here's blood, and the trail leads this way." And Surefoot went down the hall, tracking some one by marks of dark red on the floor. "Your bear has crawled away."

"Then woe is us!" cried Amy, a whiteness of fear sweeping across her face. "If we have not finished this monster of the forest we will feel his hand again."

"Not while Surefoot can come between," was the reply. "Wait for me here."

In another moment the captives of the French were alone, for the half-breed had vanished.

They waited for him, but he did not come back.

The hours dragged wearily along, and, at last, em-

bracing each other and tired of the long vigil, the two girls fell asleep upon the cot in the little room.

Red Fox had received a new lease of life. His time had not yet come, and the fates had reserved him for a fate not to be prescribed by the pistol of a young girl.

Down in the town Capt. Lee paced the floor of his quarters, wrapped in reflection.

He had already discovered the very things Amherst had sent him after.

He knew the armament of the fortress, the placings of the guns, the strength of the batteries and the number of men in blue and white.

Surefoot had helped him a little in this, but he had it all at his tongue's end.

Duty called him from Louisbourg, but when he thought of the two captives in the hands of the enemy he hesitated.

He could not quit the fortress with them still in captivity, and in the attack soon to be made, when the heavy guns of Amherst should open on the doomed walls of Louisbourg, they would be in the direst danger.

More than once, since entering the death trap of the French, Capt. Lee had thought of his friends, the Young Guardsmen in the other camp.

What of Vernon and Mason? What of Nimble Ned? What of all the young gallants who had followed him from Virginia under the banners of royal George? Had they reached the belief that he really

did disobey orders under fire, and that his punishment was just? He could not believe it. Yet he must be under a cloud while the mystery of his mission had not been cleared up; and, after all, perhaps, it was wrong to leave it all to Amherst.

Of course, he did not know of Nimble Ned's encounter with the red message-bearer in the woods near the British lines.

He did not know that the young private of the Guards had performed a great service to the king's cause.

As the moments slipped away, and he found himself the sole occupant of the little room to which Drucour had assigned him, he thought of many things.

Why had not Surefoot permitted him to finish Red Fox?

He had that fiend in scarlet at the point of his sword, and in another second he would have finished his career; but Surefoot had to throw himself into the *mêlée* and push back the avenging blade.

Perhaps he would never get another chance at that red bosom.

Lee almost cursed the half-breed while he paced the floor with impatient steps. The sound of the sea came in at the casement-like window, not much larger than his hat, and for a time he stood in the middle of the floor and listened.

This was duty. This was a part of his allegiance

to King George of Hanover—to be confined between four walls with his life in jeopardy and spies at his heels.

For he did not doubt that every person in the fort who regarded him with suspicion was a real spy, ready to denounce him to Drucour, and willing to prove that he was an impostor.

Capt. Lee of the Guards thus had much to employ his mind that night.

He heard the sentries call out in French the midnight hour, adding that all was well.

The words smote his ears with a grim humor.

He started, went to the door, and, opening it, looked out into the corridor.

Something moved down the passageway, but not soon enough to escape the eye of the young Virginian.

It flitted out of sight, but Lee was sure it had not gone far.

Falling back into the little chamber, he picked up his sword and went out into the hall.

Shutting his teeth hard, he advanced down the hall, his sword before him and his eyes on the alert.

The light was not good, but the lad had keen eyes accentuated by long service in the forest.

He slipped forward, eager to discover the flitting figure, and suddenly he came upon it.

Lee would have laughed outright but for the grotesqueness of the object—a child crouching against the

wall and looking up at him with a pair of large, wondering eyes.

Once before he had seen the child—a half-breed boy, not past four, and said to be a protégé of Drucour's.

The little one tried to shrink into the wall itself at sight of Lee, but the young soldier leaned forward and pulled him from the stonelike substance.

"What is it, Andre?" he asked, feeling the child trembling in his grasp. "Why have you come hither to-night?"

For the first time, the child smiled.

"You are not cold?"

Little Andre shook his head.

Then he pointed to his little shirt, and Lee, feeling over the heart, found something there that felt like folded paper.

"A message?" said he, as he looked again into the child's face.

"Talking paper," was the answer.

In a moment Lee had extracted a bit of paper from its hiding place and was carrying Andre to his own room.

Setting the child upon his cot, the young provincial began to unfold the sheet, which was not large, and in a few seconds he had it spread out before him.

Little Andre looked wonderingly on.

At first Lee could not make out anything on the paper but a lot of miserable scrawling; then he began

to read, word by word, and at last the whole message burst upon his mind.

The import of it startled him.

"You must go at once. Your life is not worth the flash of powder in the pan. All has been discovered."

There was no signature to these startling words.

He looked in vain for it, and turned the paper over and over in his search.

In his dilemma he turned to little Andre.

"Who gave you this, child?" he asked.

The blue eyes seemed to enlarge, and the child shook his head.

"Where did you get this?" asked Lee again, as he bent over the half-breed midget on his cot. "Some one sent this to me by you. Who did?"

Andre seemed dazed by the few ornaments in the little room. He was fascinated by the golden hilt of Lee's sword; he laughed as he timidly put his hand on the naked blade, and then fumbled, childishly, Lee's sash.

"My God, child! moments are precious!" cried Lee. "Who sent you to me?"

For the first time, Andre seemed to understand.

"Man," he said.

"Yes, I know; but what was he like?"

"Dark-faced man—Indian."

"Come, no Indian. These red fiends would not warn

me of danger. They would sooner throw me into it and see the finish. No, Andre, it was no Indian."

"Indian," repeated the child.

"Then where was he?"

Andre pointed toward the door.

"Outside, eh?" exclaimed the young captain. "It cannot have been Surefoot. He would have come himself."

"Indian."

"Oh, this is torture! I am discovered, am I? Who has betrayed me?"

Lee darted toward the open door and looked up and down the corridor. In a moment he came back and lifted the little one from his cot and carried him away. Already Andre was asleep, and as Lee bore him toward the main door he looked into his face.

"Some one who must know made this child his messenger," said the young provincial to himself.

Outside the house, which was built after the manner of old stone colonials, Lee paused.

It was past midnight, and he felt the breath of the sea on his face.

The boy, asleep in his arms, did not know what was taking place.

Little Andre had the freedom of the fortress; sometimes he slept at Drucour's quarters on one of the silken cots, at other times he crept into the humbler homes of the poor Frenchies and coddled there. Every-

where he was a favorite, and Lee had taken to him some time before.

Suspected! The young soldier felt his blood tingle at the thought.

If this were really true, he was in the direst danger; some one in the English camp might have betrayed him, and he knew that to be unmasked under the flag of Drucour meant a short shrift—shot to death on the bastion, and his body flung into the sea.

The young Virginian stood for some minutes in the night. He felt the warm body of little Andre against his own, and when he started off he hugged the baby boy closer.

“Halt!”

The challenge rang out loud and clear, and Lee drew back.

Before him stood a sentry with his musket thrust almost into his face, and Lee looked over the barrel into the eyes of the unexpected guard.

“I am taking the child home,” said Lee to the guard. “I have little Andre here——”

“You cannot pass without the countersign, monsieur.”

Lee did not have this, for he did not expect to encounter guards in the streets after dark.

“You must go back, monsieur captain.”

“Come, then,” Lee said to the child. “We will go back and wait till daylight.”

The sleepy eyes unclosed for a moment, and shut again.

"I never saw a guard there before," said the young soldier. "This is strange."

Back in his chamber, he placed the child on his cot and threw himself beside him. They slumbered through the night without a break, their faces close together, and at the first flush of dawn Lee went to the door and looked out. What he saw might well drive some color from his cheeks, for the guard had been doubled and an armed sentry paced in front of his quarters!

CHAPTER XIV.

NIMBLE NED AND GEN. AMHERST.

Let us for a time leave Capt. Lee of the Young Guardsmen in old Louisbourg and retrace our steps to the camp of the besiegers.

Amherst and Boscawen acted admirably in conjunction.

The one, as commander of the fleet of formidable vessels, co-operated with the general in command on land, and in a short time after the first little fight with the enemy much progress had been made.

Seconded by Wolfe, who had left a sick bed to be with the army, Amherst worked like a giant to forward the operations.

Coehorns and cannon were dragged forward and planted at advantageous places, and the British general looked after everything personally.

There had been so much incompetency during the war that Amherst, the choice of Pitt, had been sent out for the purpose of doing something, and he felt that the eyes of the king were upon him.

Braddock had failed in the forests of the Monongahela, Fort William Henry had been taken and its garrison massacred, and the treachery of Gen. Webb had cost the British hundreds of lives. The time had come

for action. England had awakened from her lethargy, and, under the guiding hand of her great statesman, Pitt, "the man who did things," she was to retrieve some of her lost fortunes.

Amherst had just returned from inspecting the battery when he found some one in his tent besides himself.

"You?" cried the general. "I thought I had thrust you into the guardhouse!"

"That's just what you had," was the reply, accompanied by a triumphant leer in the speaker's eyes. "But you see, Gen. Amherst, you can't hold a rat long in such a trap."

"I'll send you back, sir. You talked insultingly in my presence, and——"

"I just said that the men who believed that Capt. Lee is a traitor are fools or dolts. He never flinched under fire. Why didn't you call on Nimble Ned for a witness?"

"That is all closed," cried Amherst, with a wave of his hand. "I have other matters to attend to now."

"And so have I, general."

"You? Go back to your company and stay there till you're sent for."

"Don't be in a hurry. I reckon there's no use in my hurryin' off like a rabbit with the hounds after him."

Amherst looked at the cool-headed boy and smiled.

"What is it you want?" he asked.

"I thought as how you'd like to see a bit o' paper I picked up in the camp last night."

"Where is it?"

Amherst held out his hand.

Ned felt underneath his shirt, and at last produced a folded paper, which he handed over.

He saw the general go to the door of the tent and unfold the message.

"I wonder how it'll affect him?" he asked himself.

"The devil!" cried Gen. Amherst, turning suddenly upon the boy. "Where did you get this?"

"From the fellow who carried it."

"He gave it to you?"

"Well, I took it, I reckon."

"Oh, he didn't give it up freely? I should think not, from its purport."

"It's important, then?"

"Rather," smiled the British general. "It is the work of some spy in the camp. It contains a statement of our strength, and all that."

"That's about what I made out."

"You read it, then?"

"I tried to, but I'm not up in written lingo very much. However, I thought from the person who had the paper that it would be better if it never reached Drucour."

"You are right, lad," said Amherst. "Where is that person?"

"I left him out in the woods."

"And didn't bring him in?"

"Why, bless your excellency's life! I couldn't carry a big Injun on my shoulders two miles."

"Not if he kicks," laughed the amused officer.

"This one had stopped kicking."

"Oh!"

"Yes; he had something the matter with his head, so I left him where I got the talkin' paper."

"Dead, boy?"

"As dead as Gen. Braddock," was the reply. "You see, general, I can't carry such people through the woods when I'm not feeling good. I had to kill for that paper."

"Well, you were justified in doing so. It is important."

Amherst read the paper again and turned for the second time upon Nimble Ned.

"Was the Indian alone?" he asked.

"When I tackled him—yes," was the answer. "But the person who handed him the paper had just gone away."

"Two of them, then? Did you know the other?"

"I reckon I did."

"Where is he?"

"In camp."

"He is the real spy; the other—the Indian—must

have been the selected messenger to carry this paper to Drucour."

"That's it, exactly, general."

"We must have the other one, then."

"If he hasn't got off."

"But he was in camp last night?"

"Yes."

"Who is he, boy?"

Nimble Ned drew back a pace.

"Let's make a bargain," said he, looking up into Amherst's face. "I'll tell you on one condition."

"You have the effrontery of the old scratch!" cried the Briton.

"I want to make a fair bargain—news for a promise. I don't tell what I know for no reward."

Amherst bit his lip and frowned.

"Well, what is it you want?" he asked.

"The truth about Capt. Lee's going off."

"I have told you, sir, that he was tried for disobedience of orders at the front."

"But he didn't disobey."

"The court-martial isn't in session now," frowned Amherst.

"But I am," cried Nimble Ned.

"Capt. Lee has made his escape, and we do not know where he is. He has probably added desertion to his other crime——"

"Not without a cause," was the interruption. "Gen.

Amherst, there is some mystery connected with this published disgrace of my cap'n. He never flinched in the battle."

"You know, do you?"

"I saw him all the time, for I was not in the ranks that day."

"Why didn't you speak up for your captain?"

"You never sent for me, and when I said I knew enough to clear Capt. Lee some of the officers told me to keep a still tongue in my head. That's the way it all came about. You promise me one thing, and I'll tell you who handed the message to the redskin last night."

"That would be breaking my own commands."

"Then let the traitor do what he pleases," snapped Nimble Ned. "He may remain undiscovered in camp and send to Drucour all the information he can."

For a moment Amherst looked Ned over from head to foot.

"You are a stubborn quantity," he said. "I've half a mind to lock you up again."

"You hold the key, Gen. Amherst."

"I can not only lock you up, but can have you shot before a file of soldiers for disobedience."

"Bring on your file!" was the response, as Ned looked the British commander squarely in the eye.

"By my soul! this is infamous! A boy—a chit of the forest and a colonial brat—disobeying the general

of the king's forces! It is too much! I'll call the guard."

"And give the spy and traitor more rope."

Amherst paused and looked in amazement at the youth, who faced him with the coolness of a veteran.

"What do you want me to do?" he asked.

"Ah! you're coming to it, are you, Gen. Amherst?"

"I make no rash promises—understand that."

"I don't want any. I simply want the truth."

"Well?"

"I want to know why Capt. Lee was arrested."

"You know what the court-martial did?"

"But there's something behind that. The Young Guards are at the point of mutiny, and if I were Lieuts. Vernon and Mason I'd march 'em back to Virginny and never again drew a sword for King George."

"Go on and tell me all about your plans," said Amherst. "You've got a card or two up your sleeve."

"I want the truth," said Ned. "Capt. Lee did not disobey orders, and you know it. He was brave in the battle. He led the Guards almost to the guns of the Frenchies. You must tell me why he was arrested. You must give me acknowledgment in black and white that Lee, my captain, was not a coward——"

"That's asking a good deal."

"Not too much. You will not?"

"Not now."

"Then the secret spy can work out his will right here in your camp!" cried Ned, with flashing eyes.

"Have a care, young man!" exclaimed Amherst.

"Is this the way you serve the king—by permitting spies to infest your camp?"

The British general winced.

"Come, Gen. Amherst," continued Nimble Ned. "I can do you more harm by keeping silent than all the guns on the walls of Louisbourg, and you know it."

"But you ask too much. What if I tell you, sir, that your captain is on a secret mission?"

"But that's not enough. British generals sometimes lie."

"What's that?" flashed Amherst, as he reddened. "You have the insolence of a beggar."

"I have the courage of my convictions," cried Ned. "The talkin' paper which clears my captain, or my tongue remains still."

Biting his lips again, Gen. Amherst moved to the camp table and threw himself into the army chair there.

"What are you going to do with this paper?" he asked, glancing up at Ned as he took a pen.

"I want it for my own satisfaction."

"If you show it, the captain's mission will fail."

"I'll be discreet. I will not compromise Capt. Lee."

"You must promise me first that you will show it to no one."

"Not even to Vernon and Mason?"

"Not even to them."

"Nor to Straight Tongue?"

"Nor to that person."

Ned thought a moment, and then waved his hand toward the seated commander.

"Write it out," he said; "I promise. Clear Capt. Lee of the charges you preferred against him, give him a clean bill of ladin', and trust Nimble Ned to carry out his part of the bargain."

Amherst's hand dropped to the paper bearing the royal crest and wrote deliberately for a few moments.

"Now, read it to me," said Ned.

The general did so.

"Hand it over."

Amherst sanded the writing, and, folding the paper, extended it to the young private.

Ned first looked solemnly at the document and seemed satisfied, then he thrust it beneath the green jacket and buttoned it carefully over it.

"Now for my part of the bargain," said he, as he drew close to the table and leaned over it as he looked squarely into Amherst's face. "The person who gave the talkin' paper to the Iroquois is Dick Parsons. He is the real spy in the camp."

"And who is Dick Parsons, pray?"

"A young demon with Injun blood in his veins who followed us on the vessels in the pay of the French. He is Drucour's spy, and he gave the Iroquois the paper

yonder just before I got it. Now, Gen. Amherst, we are square. I thought all along that you were lying when you charged Capt. Lee with cowardice——”

“What’s that, young sir? Don’t you repeat that epithet——”

“You lied, an’ you know it!” broke in Nimble Ned. “You may have sent Capt. Lee to his death. If you have, woe to Jeffrys Amherst of King George’s army!” And Ned vanished through the canvas door.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DUNGEONS OF LOUISBOURG.

"I am a prisoner," was the first thought of Capt. Lee when he saw the armed guard who paced with stately mien up and down the walk in front of his house.

He did not look long, but went back to little Andre, whom he had not disturbed in his innocent slumbers.

What had brought about this change of treatment he did not know, but he felt that it was all according to Drucour's orders.

For a little while he paced the floor of his room, a prey to many harassing thoughts; then he slipped again to the door and looked out.

Soldiers were forming on the parade ground.

A regiment of French grenadiers was drawn up in front of the house, and Lee watched the men for a moment ere he turned back.

He would have to accept the inevitable, whatever it was.

Presently he heard heavy footsteps on the stair, then the door opened and he stood face to face with little Capt. Bavoire.

This was the same man who had opened the gates

of old Louisbourg to him, and the moment he caught the officer's eye he knew that trouble had come.

"Monsieur captain," spoke the Frenchman, with a bow, "I have to place you under arrest."

Our young guardsman could not resist.

He merely accepted the situation and returned the Frenchman's bow.

"It is the governor's orders," pursued Bavoir. "You provoked the fight with Red Fox in the drinking house."

"I?"

"That is all I know, monsieur captain."

"But it began before I took a hand in it," replied Lee, with rising indignation. "It was started by one Decroix of your army, who took exception to the Iroquois' remarks about the war."

"I am sorry, monsieur; but I know nothing but obedience."

Capt. Lee glanced at Andre.

"Who have we here?" and Bavoir stepped into the chamber, and for a moment bent over the child. "Ah! the little angel of the fortress. Where did you run across him?"

"He came to me."

"Alone, monsieur?"

"Alone."

"Like a rat, he is everywhere. We will let him sleep. You will come with me, monsieur."

The young Virginian was ready to accompany his escort.

They passed out of the house, the little captain marching with his usual pomposity, and Lee looking at his evolutions with a smile at his lips.

Down on the parade ground he was conducted to the center of the regiment, which opened ranks for this particular purpose, and Capt. Bavoit took post at his side.

What did all this mean? It was still a puzzle to Lee, and one he could not solve.

Certainly some one had betrayed his mission, and he could only think that the betrayal had come from the British camp.

As the regiment about-faced, a swarm of redskins rushed into the narrow street and came threateningly near.

The ranks drew closer together.

Lee saw the dark looks of the warriors, and noted that they regarded him with eyes aflame with rage.

"What means all this?" he whispered to Bavoit.

"They want you, monsieur."

"Why me?"

"They say you have half killed Red Fox."

"But I did not touch the rascal, though I wanted to pin him to the wall."

"They want your blood, and if Drucour yields they will have it."

Nearer and nearer came the savages, and suddenly the air rang with their war cries.

These were enough to blanch the cheeks of the bravest, and Lee looked at the menacing line of red and involuntarily drew back.

The scarlet mob was headed by a tall chief, painted to the waist with all sorts of hideous colors, and in his hand he carried a tomahawk.

"It is Flying Eagle," said Bavoir.

The next moment the Iroquois brandished his war weapon and let out a shout that seemed to find the remotest quarters of the fortress.

"Let the whitefaces give up the man who shot Red Fox!" he exclaimed. "The Iroquois will have the blood of their foe. He wears the coat of the English king, and they will tear it from his back."

The soldiers glanced at their colonel, a grizzled veteran of three wars, and noted the dogged expression on his face.

He, in turn, looked at the head rank and drew his sword.

At the word of command the soldiers lowered their bayonets and pressed on.

From every part of the inclosed camp came Indians on vengeance bent. They joined their brethren and increased the mob till it seemed that every red man within the walled inclosure had reached the spot.

Lee's life trembled in the balances of fate,

The young guardsman laid his hand on his sword and drew it halfway from its sheath.

Capt. Bavoire gave him a look of remonstrance, but it did not cause him to remove his hand.

The regiment, menaced by the scarlet horde, halted for a moment.

“Forward!” cried Col. St. Gerome.

Once more the line moved, and the Indians fell stubbornly back.

They menaced the Frenchmen, whom they greatly outnumbered, and brandished their weapons in their very faces.

Flying Eagle glanced over his shoulder and seemed about to speak the word which would precipitate a bloody encounter.

Just then there came another cry, and a man bounded into sight.

It was the commandant himself.

Drucour looked like an enraged lion as he planted himself firmly in front of the savage horde and looked it over.

“Back!” he cried. “Rascals in red, are you the servants of Louis? Stand off and let the grenadiers pass!”

But the scarlet wall did not move.

“You will shoot into them, Col. St. Gerome,” he said to the grizzled leader. “You will give them two min-

utes to disperse, at the end of which time, if any are here, you will clear the way with ball and bayonet."

"Will the great captain listen to Flying Eagle?"

"Not now, sir. You can have your say by and by."

"The war chief of the Iroquois has a right to speak at all times. He is the servant of no one man. He now fights for the French king, but he is the child of the forest, and protected by the Great Manitou."

Drucour waved his hand dispassionately.

"I am master here," he said, coolly. "I command in Louisbourg. I am governor of the island and the main land. No redskin has a right to question the authority of Drucour under the *fleur de lys* of France. Forward, grenadiers!"

Col. St. Gerome waved his sword at the same time and repeated the command.

Flying Eagle fell back, touched almost by the lowered bayonets, and the reds at his back recoiled with him.

It was paleface *versus* red, and the crisis had come.

"Flying Eagle can transfer his allegiance to the British," he hissed.

"Take your wolves wherever you please," was the retort. "Capt. Lee is under arrest for assaulting Red Fox, and he shall have a fair trial."

"But white will help white."

"There is justice in white bosoms—none in red," cried Drucour. "You and your warriors must abide by the decision of my court."

Flying Eagle glared at the governor and bit his stained lips almost through.

Drucour turned for the last time to Col. St. Gerome.

"Don't miss a man," he said, so that all could hear. "The two minutes are up."

Five hundred muskets touched as many shoulders and cheeks dropped to the glazed stocks.

The rough faces of the grenadiers, not one of whom loved an Indian, rested lightly against the muskets and fingers touched the triggers.

"Count three, Col. St. Gerome, and then fire," commanded the governor.

"One!" said the colonel.

Everybody held their breath.

"Two!"

The red line wavered.

Flying Eagle fell back, but menacingly.

The prize was slipping through his grasp; the victim of his vengeance was about to escape.

Suddenly a panic seemed to seize the Indians.

The slow recoil grew into a run, the savages fled from the leveled muskets of France, and before St. Gerome could utter the third numeral not a redskin was in sight.

The terrible tension ended, Capt. Lee breathed freer.

He looked around for Drucour, but that worthy had disappeared.

St. Gerome was marching at the head of the regiment, and the strain was over.

Three minutes later the strong iron door of the fortress prison opened appallingly for Lee.

The prison itself was set in one of the bastions, and the heavy door seemed to say, in the language of Dante: "Who enters here leaves hope behind."

Capt. Bavoit took our young hero by the arm and led him inside.

"Courage, monsieur captain," he said, in a whisper. "You were saved by the governor. Maybe he will be lenient."

Lee's answer was a smile of thanks for the assurance, and in a moment he was treading a narrow passageway which led downward as if into the bowels of the earth.

But few of the soldiers now followed him.

Bavoit held his arm until another door was reached, which he opened with a large iron key, and Lee found himself in a small cell as rayless as the tombs of Egypt.

"Adieu, monsieur captain," said the little officer, as he fell back.

Lee could not reply. The damp odors of the place nearly drove all thoughts of politeness from his heart.

He heard the door clang shut; he heard the demon key grate in the lock, and for a moment he listened to the receding tread of the grenadier guards.

Then for half a second he gave way to despair.

He cursed Amherst, he threw invectives at the man who had planned it all, sending him into Louisbourg under suspicion among his own comrades, and finally he filled the cell with ravings at his fate.

He was in the dungeons of the old fortress.

He had heard strange stories concerning these dread *oubliettes*, but he had never credited them.

Englishmen who had taken Louisbourg years before from France had whispered terrible tales of these same dungeons, but they seemed incredible.

Now Lee was ready to believe anything.

He drew to the nearest wall and ran his hand over it in its inky blackness.

It was cold and damp; in fact, it emitted a disgusting ooze that chilled him to the bone.

Without his tinder box he could not strike a light.

All he could do was to feel his way around his prison and calculate its dimensions.

But perhaps he would not be there long.

Drucour would certainly grant him a speedy trial, and then he would show that he had not taken a drop of Red Fox's blood.

But the moments wore on. He thought of Amy and Joanna, of Surefoot and little Andre, and the strange message the child had brought him.

It had all proved true. He had enemies who wanted his life, and perhaps he had really been betrayed.

Lee leaned against the wall till he could stand it no longer.

He went to the door ; he tried the lock, but, of course, it did not yield.

"Curse them all!" he cried. "I have been sent here to perish! I will reckon with Amherst if ever I get out!"

Suddenly he heard a noise that sounded like a tapping on one of the midnight walls.

Following up the sound, he at last stooped and placed one ear against the stone.

"Who is there?" said a faint voice from the other side.

"I am Capt. George Lee, the prisoner of Drucour. Who are you?"

"Sansom, of the guards. I am a prisoner, too."

"For how long?"

"For five years, as well as I can count."

Lee groaned.

Five years in a dungeon like the one he occupied!

Then he put his lips close to the stones again.

"What was your act?"

"I tried to quit the service. They did not shoot me, but they did worse. They put me in here. But I have rats to play with, and they all know their names."

There was a laugh at the end of the last sentence, and Lee drew back with a shudder.

"What have you done?" came through the wall.

"Nothing. Drucour will liberate me in a short time."

"Not after he has put you in one of the underground cells. We are next to the sea. If you listen you can hear the roar of the breakers."

Lee turned away. He felt despair gnawing at his heart, and his blood seemed turning to ice.

He drew himself up and registered a vow that he would some day escape from that horrible place and live to pay his enemies back.

His words came back mockingly to his ears, and he put his hands over them to keep out the demon echoes.

CHAPTER XVI.

MASTER PARSONS MEETS WITH BAD LUCK.

"He does not report," said Gen. Amherst to Straight Tongue, who stood in his presence one night after Lee's misfortune. "You have heard all about the arrest and Capt. Lee's departure from camp? He was to report soon. He certainly entered the fortress, but he is silent. Has he turned against us?"

"Your excellency should know that Capt. Lee is true to the king," was the answer, as the face of Straight Tongue flushed with indignation.

"But why does he not send out word?"

"Perhaps he cannot."

"I can tell you," said another voice, as the flap of the tent was raised and Nimble Ned sprang into the place. "Capt. Lee is dead, sir."

"Dead?" cried Amherst.

"As good as dead," was the reply. "They have him under arrest, and he is now in the underground cells of the fortress."

Both men turned upon the young private, and Amherst looked him over from head to foot.

"Who told you, sir?" he demanded.

"The Frenchies."

"Where have you been?"

"At the foot of the walls," replied Ned. "I would have gone into the place myself if necessary, but I got news enough on the outside."

"That is bad enough," spoke Straight Tongue. "If Capt. Lee is in those terrible dungeons he cannot be rescued too soon."

"That is true," answered Amherst, reflectively. "But how can he have met with this misfortune?"

"You remember," said Nimble Ned, "the person who gave the message to the Indian I killed? Is not Dick Parsons shrewd enough to have told Drucour all? And you have not apprehended this young wolf of the woods. He followed us from Virginia, sir; I had a tussle with him on shipboard, and he came near slittin' my weasand. He is in French pay, and I told you, Gen. Amherst, that so long as he remains at large so long will your secret plans be betrayed."

"Where is he now?"

"Ask the rabbit where he is after he has been chased by the hounds."

"Have a care with your words, young sir!" cried the commander of the British.

"I never put a bridle on my tongue till I want it there," was the answer. "I am Nimble Ned, and I speak as I please."

"Straight Tongue, this is bad—too bad! What is to be done?"

"Why not open the ball?"

"We are not quite ready. I have been waiting for news from my young spy."

"He can send nothing from the dungeons of Louisbourg."

"It would seem so, if he is really there."

"Let me find out."

"Go!" cried Amherst. "Get into the fortress, if possible, to-night, and report at once."

Straight Tongue saluted and withdrew.

"May I go along?" asked Nimble Ned.

"You boy? No. Straight Tongue will solve this mystery alone. But I may not return."

"And if you do not?"

The old hunter stopped and laid one of his bronzed hands upon Nimble Ned's shoulder.

Then he whispered a few words into the lad's ears, at which Ned looked up and his eyes flashed.

"I'll do it, Straight Tongue, if you never come back!" he cried. "By the soul of my dearest ones! I will carry out the plan. And the man over yonder shall feel the vengeance of Nimble Ned."

He threw a look in the direction of Amherst's headquarters, and the two passed on.

In the wood not far from the French pickets they separated, and Nimble Ned turned back.

Straight Tongue walked on and vanished among the deepening shadows of the tall trees.

Nimble Ned slipped back into the English camp and drew near the tent of its commander.

He could look between the flaps of the curtain and see familiar figures—Amherst, Wolfe and some of the lesser officers.

It was a council of war on the eve of the opening struggle for Louisbourg.

It was not the youth's intention to play eavesdropper, and he was about to turn away when he heard a rustle among the leaves near the tent.

Slipping forward, he discerned a figure lying on the ground within arm's length of the canvas.

In a moment his keen eyes became riveted on the dark object, and he made out that it was human in shape and watchful.

"Dick Parsons at work!" said Ned, under his breath. "Here is the king serpent of them all."

For a little while he watched the figure that hugged the ground, and then crept nearer.

No one knew woodcraft better than Nimble Ned. His service in the Guards had rendered him an expert, and he was the equal of the shrewdest—white and red.

If Dick Parsons was plying his dangerous avocation he was playing a deep game.

Ned continued to regard him for some time, or until he became certain that he was not mistaken.

Every sense was on the alert.

Crawling over the ground, making no noise, with

his eyes seeing nothing but the flattened figure at the foot of the tent, Nimble Ned Halpine held his breath. It was a crawl that would have done credit to the subtlest serpent of the forest.

Suddenly, but without a cry, the figure of the young private sprang into the air and fell upon the back of the listener.

There was a short gasp as his hands sought the other's throat, and for a moment a little struggle ensued.

Caught in the very act, Dick Parsons tried to shake off his captor; but the strong arms of Nimble Ned were about him, and he had to submit.

"Not so fast, my fellow!" hissed Ned, as he tightened his grip. "This is just what I've longed for. I have you good and strong, and you will find out in a jiffy that listening at Amherst's tent is not all fun."

Dick growled out something, tried once more to break his adversary's hold, but without avail, and finished the struggle.

"Come right along," said Ned. "Since you seem to be anxious to hear Gen. Amherst talk, you shall."

"For mercy's sake, no!" cried the prisoner.

"For mercy's sake, yes, I say! Come with me, Master Parsons. This is not the deck of the *Arethusa*. We are on solid ground now, and in no danger of being washed overboard."

"Look here," cried Dick, as he drew back as far as Ned would let him. "I wasn't doing anything."

"Of course not! The man who is caught stealing never does anything."

"But I don't care to see Gen. Amherst."

"No?"

"I'll give you all the gold I've got on my person, and I've got a lot——"

"Drucour's gold, isn't it?"

"Never mind—it is good," put in Dick. "I'll give you all, I say, Master Halpine, for liberty."

Ned seemed to temporize.

"How much have you got? Let us see."

He took Dick to a spot where some fagots lay, and these he fanned into a flame.

"Now," he said, "shell out your yellow wheels."

Buoyant with hope, Dick opened his shirt, and, reaching inside, drew up a leathern bag well filled with coin.

As he poured it all out he looked into his captor's face.

"French money, isn't it?" asked Ned.

"Yes, but it's good."

"Of course—as good as King George's."

"There are more than five hundred 'wheels,' as you call them," continued Master Parsons.

"We'll not count 'em, but will take your word for it," smiled Nimble Ned.

"It is all yours for my liberty."

"Do you think your freedom is worth that much?"

"That lies with you, sir," said Dick. "You see I am inclined to be liberal."

"You're entirely too much so," was the reply. "Is this all you've got?"

"N-no."

"Where is the balance?"

"It's not in money."

"Not in money?" cried Ned. "I don't understand you."

"It is in jewels."

"Jehoshaphat! What sort of treasury are you?"

Dick did not reply, but smiled as he again dived his hand into the recesses of his garments.

This time he brought to light a smaller bag with a draw string, and the next moment he had emptied into his hand a number of little stones that shone like diamonds.

Nimble Ned looked first at them and then at their owner.

"Where did you get them?"

"In war," said Dick.

"They are the property of some people whom you have betrayed—some persons killed by the Indians and robbed by yourself."

"It is not true."

"Nobody gave them to you for services. People don't pay in jewels."

"But they're mine," was the answer. "Where I got them, no matter; but they will make you rich."

"As rich almost as King George or Louis," smiled Nimble Ned. "But what would I do with such gew-gaws?"

"Give them to your sweetheart."

"Just as if I had such a useless thing!" laughed the forest ranger. "I couldn't carry 'em on my person, an' if I did I wouldn't sleep o' nights."

"I never mind them," said Dick.

"Put 'em up, Master Parsons. I don't want 'em," Ned exclaimed. "I wouldn't know what to do with them, I say."

"But won't they buy my freedom?"

"Not from me."

Sullenly Dick replaced the jewels in the bag and then ran his fingers through the gold.

"But you can spend this," he said.

"I could, that's a fact; but——"

"It's yours. Now, good-night."

Dick would have risen to his feet if the hand of Ned had not seized his arm.

"Not yet, sir!" he said, sternly. "If you had your weight in gold you could not buy me off."

"What! Aren't you going to accept the money?"

"Not by a long shot! You are going with me to Amherst. He wants to see you, and he will give more for you than all you've got on your person."

Dick's face blanched, and he looked silently at his captor.

"This way, not that," resumed Nimble Ned. "I will introduce you to the general. He is with Gen. Wolfe and the rest o' 'em just now. Come right along, Master Parsons. If you resist you'll be dragged dead into Gen. Amherst's tent!"

The hand of Ned tightened again on his prisoner's arm, and Dick said nothing, but looked away.

CHAPTER XVII.

STRAIGHT TONGUE'S MISSION.

In spite of his remonstrances—and Dick did not like to go—the young spy was dragged away.

Nimble Ned knew the value of his prisoner, and he was not the one to let him give him the slip.

Therefore in a few moments Master Parsons was hustled into the presence of the generals, and Ned, with a triumphant look in his eyes, held him while he told Amherst who he was.

There was scant ceremony in dealing with Dick.

He suddenly maintained a stubborn silence and refused to answer a single question, for he had been caught red-handed, and there was little need of denial.

Amherst ordered him to be taken away and confined on board one of the ships in the cove, for he did not intend to take any chances with the prisoner.

Ned was complimented for his prowess and did not leave Dick until he saw him in good hands and on his way to the guardship.

In the meantime, over in the fortress scenes were being enacted that bear upon our story.

The rage of the Indians in being cheated out of their prey did not put them into a very happy frame of mind.

Red Fox, who had escaped death at Joanna's hands, had managed to creep from the house with a bad wound in his head, and it was this that had so incensed Flying Eagle and his braves.

The fiery young Iroquois was nursing his wound and his ire in the camp of the redskins, and inwardly cursing Drucour, whose promptness had baffled him.

Red Fox was ready for treachery of any sort, and had Amherst been able to reach him while the heat of anger was on he could have secured a formidable ally.

Drucour had prepared for a vigorous defense of the fortress.

He knew that Amherst had come determined to reduce at all hazards the stronghold that defied England in the North, and to avenge the butchery of Fort William Henry.

The vessels in the harbor were cleared for battle, for Drucour feared that Boscawen might make for them, as the admiral commanded a lot of adventurous sailors who would not hesitate to try to cut them out under the very muzzle of the cannon on the bastions.

The French commandant did all in his power to feed the bravery of his soldiers, but he had no use for the treacherous savages and hated the very name of Iroquois, for to him it was connected with massacre and rapine.

Capt. Lee was still in the dungeon of the fortress.

He could lean against the stone wall and reflect upon

the circumstances that had placed him in that perilous position.

He wondered if Surefoot knew of his situation.

He thought of Amy and Joanna and wondered again if they had witnessed the attempt of the Indians to secure his person.

Yes, the fair captives knew.

They had witnessed all from a distance.

Terrified by the menace of hatchet and knife, they saw Capt. Lee confronted by the scarlet mob, but they had been powerless to offer aid.

A young officer informed them of Red Fox's wound, but neither said anything concerning it, though both knew, as we are aware, all about it.

The day passed and another night came.

The Indians still nursed their rage in their part of the town; the guards tramped the tops of the bastions and Drucour waited for the opening of the heavy guns.

His wife, who had shared all the dangers of his post, was with him—a brave woman who has passed down into history as one of its heroines; and the commandant of Louisbourg, susceptible always to the charms of the fair sex, found in her a brave helpmeet.

Could one of the guards on the dauphin's bastion have seen a figure that dropped catlike to the ground, his curiosity would have been excited.

But, fortunately for the person who had gained ad-

mission to Louisbourg, the sentry's back was turned, and the interloper made off under cover of the night.

This person was clad as a savage after the manner of Surefoot, and when he reached a certain part of the town he halted and watched a group of officers who were discussing the advance of the English.

For some time he stood in the shadow of a house and listened to the animated conversation; then he made off.

A stray Indian raised no comment within the fortress at that hour, for they came and went whenever they pleased; but our one redskin, if redskin he was, had an object in view.

Presently this person entered that part of the town where Drucour lived.

The French commander had just entered his house, where he was looking over some papers which Madame Drucour had arranged for his inspection.

He did not hear the approach of anyone, nor did he dream that he was not alone in the room till he heard a noise and looked up into the face of an Indian.

The French commander paused in his task, and an expression of rage grew on his face.

He was alone with his visitor.

"What is it?" he asked. "Why do you come to my house unsummoned?"

"Black Wolf comes and goes when he pleases," answered the other.

Drucour looked again.

"You're Mohawk, aren't you?"

"Black Wolf is Mohawk. The white brother guesses well."

Drucour turned half round in his chair and threw a quick look toward the door leading into madame's apartments.

"Speak, sir," he said to the Indian. "What is it?"

The newcomer came closer and rested one hand upon the edge of the commandant's table.

"I have come from the outside," he said.

"From the outside!" repeated the French governor, with a start. "Then you have passed through the camp of the enemy."

"I am from the camp of the enemy."

"But you do not belong there?"

"I belong to Gen. Amherst's army."

Drucour caught the arms of the chair and seemed to sink his fingers into the wood in the agitation of the moment.

"But you say you are Mohawk——"

"I am not Mohawk. You will pardon the deception," was the interruption. "I am a white man."

"You?"

"There is a little Indian blood in my veins, but not quite enough to hurt," and Black Wolf smiled. "I am Straight Tongue, of the forest rangers."

"Of Amherst's rangers?"

"Yes. I was with Col. Washington at the Monongahela. I helped to lift Gen. Braddock from his horse, and I fought your people to the bitter end that woeful day. I am Straight Tongue, and I am not here to betray my people."

The coolness of the man who had thus unmasked himself amazed Drucour.

He fell back into his chair and gazed in silence into the face above him.

Such audacity he had never seen.

At last, striking the table with his fist, he cried out :

"What brought you thither? Do you not know, man, that you have entered the house of death?"

"Straight Tongue counts the cost before he ventures," was the reply. "He is here for his child."

"Your child?"

"Yes, Joanna. She was brought thither with her friend, Mistress Randolph, by that red fiend, Red Fox. He killed their escort far to the south, as you must know, and Straight Tongue is here to take them out of danger before the great guns open upon you."

"They are to open soon?"

"As sure as fate."

Drucour laughed.

"They cannot open any too soon for me," he said. "We are ready for your general. But you have the audacity of Satan to enter Louisbourg and make a demand right in its commander's quarters."

"I have learned to fear nothing when my children are in danger."

"You have more than one child, then?"

"Two of them, your excellency—Karana and Joanna. Karana is out of danger now. I have not to look after her."

"But your child is safe here."

"With the great guns of the English about to belch death and destruction upon the fortress?"

"The bastions are strong, and your general will get all he wants when he begins the fight."

"That is only the boast of an enemy."

"You do not believe it, then?"

"It is to be tried. You will not give me my child?"

"How did you come into the fortress?" asked Drucour.

"I climbed over the dauphin's bastion."

"Where was the guard?"

"At his post, but men do not have eyes in the backs of their heads."

"That is true, but mine should have," said the commandant.

Straight Tongue looked at Drucour for a moment longer, and then said:

"I have heard something since I entered the fortress. You have sent one Capt. Lee to the dungeon."

"Yes. Amherst tried him, and would have dismissed him from the service for disobedience. He came to

us, and I sent him to the dungeon for two reasons—one to save him from the Indians and the other to hold him safely."

"How's that? Do you mistrust him?"

"There's no telling what tricks you English may not be up to. Yes, sir, Capt. Lee is in the dungeon."

"You will deliver him up to me, along with Joanna and her friend, Mistress Randolph."

"To you?" cried Drucour, as he gave Straight Tongue a look that was bitter defiance. "To you, one man as against six thousand?"

"To me—to Straight Tongue."

"By my life! you have the coolness of a legion of fiends from below."

"Never mind that."

Straight Tongue's hand fell upon the commandant's scarlet cuff as his hand reached out for a silver call bell on the table. "You will not touch that bell, your excellency. You will keep your hand where it is."

"Sir?"

"You have ears, and you heard me, sir. You will listen to the father of Joanna. You will summon to this room, at once, three persons, Capt. Lee, Mistress Randolph and Joanna."

"I will do nothing of the kind."

The painted face of Straight Tongue seemed to touch the white cheek of Drucour as it came down-

ward, and the Frenchman looked up into a pair of gleaming eyes.

"You will do what I say, or when the French flag is lowered you will not get to surrender your sword to my general."

There was a threat in the sentence, and the commander of Louisbourg saw it.

Just then he heard a familiar voice from the adjoining room.

It pronounced his name.

"My wife!" he said, looking again into Straight Tongue's face.

"I have no business with madame," smiled the old forester. "I am having business with your excellency. You will call your orderly."

"But——"

"Come, your excellency. You will do one of two things—die at your table or swear that you will carry out my designs and let me depart with the prisoners."

"But my honor as a soldier of France——"

"Is not your life worth something to you?" broke in Straight Tongue.

"It is, but honor is dearer still."

"Very well," coolly responded the painted white man, as he fell back a pace. "You will not? Then, by heavens! I shall make Madame Drucour a widow!"

The commandant made an effort to quit the chair, but the hand of Straight Tongue thrust him back.

"The prisoners or your life, sir!" he said, through his teeth. "Which shall it be?"

A spasm of fear swept across Drucour's face, then he heard a noise, for the door had opened and his wife stood before them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECOND RED MOB.

Madame Drucour was a haughty woman of commanding presence and great beauty.

As she faced the two men in the little room, robed in her night garments that trailed to the floor, she appeared to the simple Straight Tongue as a personage summoned from the unseen world.

Her face was white, but above her cheeks burned two lustrous eyes, that seemed to pierce to the depths of his very soul.

"What means this?" cried the woman, riveting her gaze upon the scout. "Why are you here with my husband?"

"You can ask him, madame," was the reply.

Haughtily the commandant's wife turned full upon him.

"Who is that man? He is not an Indian, though he wears the Indian dress. His voice sounds like a white man's."

"He is a white man. He is from the enemy's camp."

"An ally?"

"Not an ally nor a spy. He is here with a demand, my dear."

"And what sort of a demand, pray?"

"He is the father, so he says, of the darker of the two young ladies whom Red Fox brought to Louisbourg from the South."

"Oh! Joanna's parent?"

"So he tells me."

"And he has come for her?"

"For more than she. He demands the release of the two captives and the young captain as well."

"What! Of the captain who is now in the dungeon?" cried Madame Drucour.

"Yes, Marguerite."

"And what is your answer?"

"I have not answered him yet."

"You will release them, will you not?"

"I might be willing to compromise on the young ladies, but I do not want to send the young captain back to his camp for punishment. He fled from the fulfillment of a sentence."

"But he has nearly caused a bloody riot since entering the fortress."

"That is true. He is safe from savage rage where he is."

"Husband," and the voice of Madam Drucour dropped to a sympathetic tone, "the love of a father for his child passes all comprehension. That man must love the fair Joanna."

"But what right has he to demand the release of the other two?"

"Capt. Lee is not a prisoner," burst forth Straight Tongue. "He cannot be held as such, because he came to you voluntarily. The others are captives, and you have a right to release them."

Drucour looked away, and for a moment seemed to be waging a mental battle.

"Pardon me, but I cannot remain here all night," continued Straight Tongue. "I have given you the alternative. Commandant Drucour, I have laid the law down before you. You will release the three, or the woman who stands at your side becomes a widow."

"Heavens!" cried the haughty woman, as she fell back. "Is it so terrible, then?"

"Madame," said the scout, "it is that or nothing."

"Husband, what is your answer?"

The next instant the hand of Drucour struck the table, and it shook with everything upon it.

"I will not be dealt with thus under my own flag!" he cried. "I will not submit to dictation. I am Drucour, of Louisbourg, and I will not be browbeat by one who plays Indian for the purpose of passing through my lines. Go back to your camp, and fight for those whom you profess to love. Go back to your camp, and come after them in the shock of battle."

It was the defiance of a man who had a brave heart in his bosom.

The face of the commandant had grown scarlet, and his right hand had half drawn his sword, when madame laid her hand on it.

"You must not," she said, with gentleness. "You must not provoke this man."

"I will kill him in his tracks before I submit."

"Just as you please, sir," answered Straight Tongue, and, stepping back, he whipped his blanket aside and flashed out a shortened rifle.

"It is the prisoners or a widow," he said, coolly. "Straight Tongue admires the bravery of Drucour, but the French governor must yield or die."

"Then I die!"

"He will submit," said Madame Drucour, looking at Straight Tongue. "They will be handed over to you."

"Not while I live," and again the hand of Drucour was thrust toward the call bell, but his wife's pushed it back.

"You can send for the three persons," she said. "I will give the necessary orders."

"You, Marguerite?"

"I command now," was the answer. "I will send for them."

Drucour looked up into his wife's face and groaned.

Madame stepped to a door that led into the hall and called to the sentry.

"Send your nearest guard for Capt. Bavoire," she said.

Then she came back into the chamber and took her stand beside her husband's chair.

In a few minutes footsteps were heard in the corridor, and little Capt. Bavoire was saluting his commander.

"Capt. Bavoire, you will bring thither at once the young ladies whom Red Fox brought to Louisbourg and also the young British captain in the dungeon."

Bavoire looked at Drucour for confirmation of this command, but the commandant did not speak.

Straight Tongue came in for an inquisitive glance, but that worthy kept silence.

The little captain whirled on his heel and marched out, and the three were alone again.

The seconds seemed to reach into minutes, and the minutes resolved themselves into hours to the anxious Straight Tongue.

At last the familiar tread of Capt. Bavoire was heard, and the door opened.

"The young ladies cannot be found," he reported.

"You were at their house, Capt. Bavoire?" asked Madame Drucour.

"I have just come from the house, madame."

"And what about the prisoner in the dungeon?"

"Oh, he is there, but I did not think it wise to bring him out, as the town is filling up again with Indians, and Flying Eagle is at their head."

"That red demon out again?" roared Drucour, springing up.

"The king's square is now a mass of howling redskins——"

"What has happened?"

"Red Fox is dead."

"The devil!" shouted Drucour. "You must let me go to my duty, sir," he said, looking at Straight Tongue. "We will discuss our business when I have quelled this riot."

"Swear it to me," and the hand of the forester clutched the commandant's arm.

"Yes, swear it," said madam, to her husband.

Drucour caught up a book lying on the table and pressed it to his lips.

"That will do. I'll go with you," said Straight Tongue. "What has taken Red Fox off so that the Indians are mad?"

"Capt. Lee is accused of having given him the death wound, but I am now convinced he did not. It has all leaked out. He was shot by your child, Joanna, and afterward stabbed by a rival."

"By my little girl? Well, I taught her how to shoot, and my life for it, that she had cause to shoot that red hound."

"She had. He was in the young ladies' room."

"Enough! You are going out? So am I."

Drucour and Straight Tongue rushed from the house

together, and at the step were met by an officer who was about to enter.

"Ah, here you are, governor," cried the officer, who was St. Gerome. "The redskins are all out again. They are a pack of maddened tigers."

"Where are they?" cried Drucour, laying his hand on his sword. "I must have you shoot through them, colonel."

"That will mean a battle right here in the fortress."

"Then, by heavens! a battle it shall be. Come!"

St. Gerome turned and followed Drucour.

The colonel of the French grenadiers had spoken truly, for the king's square was thronged with Indians in all manner of garb and war paint.

The air was filled with hoarse imprecations as the savages danced like mad under the leadership of their chiefs.

It was an universal demand of blood for blood, and all the passions of their savage nature rose paramount to everything else.

What could Drucour do with such a mob?

He reached the spot, with Straight Tongue at his side, and St. Gerome but a few feet behind.

"Where's your regiment?" he asked St. Gerome.

"Yonder," and the Frenchman pointed to the soldiers drawn up in double lines.

"Advance your men. Take position on that side of the plaza."

St. Gerome moved away.

The Indians showed no signs of fear as Drucour showed himself to them. They greeted him with stubborn silence, and lowering looks were all the ones he got.

"What do you want now?" he asked Flying Eagle, as that chief stood haughtily in front of his wall of fiends. "Why all this noise?"

"Red Fox has gone to the Great Manitou. He has died at the hand of the white soldier in the dungeon. The Iroquois want blood for blood. They want the life of the long knife who serves the king who lives on an island."

"But Capt. Lee is in my hands——"

"He must be handed over to the Iroquois."

"To a lot of wolves," broke in Drucour, unable to control his temper.

"The red men will not fight for the king of France unless the white soldier is given over to them."

"Then the king will be fortunate," sneered the commandant. "You are not worthy to serve under any banner. Col. St. Gerome, I give these people one minute to disperse."

This was greeted with shouts of derision.

The colonel of the grenadiers looked down the ranks of his men.

The men picked up their muskets.

Suddenly Flying Eagle jerked his feathered cape from his shoulder and waved it before his face.

"To the dungeon!" he cried. "The Iroquois will have the white killer of Red Fox!"

In an instant the whole mob seemed to fall upon the grenadiers.

The soldiers were trampled under foot as the wild horde rushed over them; they had not had time to lift a musket to their shoulders, for Flying Eagle had taken them unawares.

The hoarse voice of Drucour tried in vain to stem the tide.

St. Gerome was thrown aside in the *mêlée*, the grenadiers were scattered in every direction.

The wildest excitement prevailed, for the blood of the Indians was hot, and a single act might cost hundreds of lives within the ramparts of Louisbourg.

"Where is he?" suddenly cried Straight Tongue, as he seized Drucour's arm. "Where is Capt. Lee? Tell me quick."

"He is in dungeon number six—underneath the bastion."

"Which bastion?"

"The king's—the one that faces the sea."

"Who knows the way?"

Straight Tongue looked around, but Drucour had vanished.

"I know the way!" cried a voice at his side. "I saw them take the cap'n thither. I——"

"You are Surefoot! Come, then. We must circumvent this murderous pack if we can."

The two friends rushed away.

"Gods! Some one is trying to check the Indians!" cried Straight Tongue a moment later. "They are wheeling artillery into the little street. Some one has nerve in the old town."

The Indians, frightened for a moment by the presence of the cannon, which soldiers were pulling into the street before them, drew off and looked at their leaders.

"This way," cried Surefoot. "We can get there by a shorter route if the guns will check the devils for a minute. Everything depends on the guns."

In another moment the two friends were running down a narrower street, making for the king's bastion, with the salvation of Capt. Lee in view. They thought not of themselves, but only of the peril of the young guardsman.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BREATH OF DEATH.

How fared it with the young guardsman? Let us see.

Cooped up in the dungeon, through whose walls he could hear the ceaseless roar of the restless surf, he awaited his fate.

The hours waned, bringing no relief, the long night, and then the next day passed.

He had no way by which he could calculate time, and he could only hope that he would be released to answer to the Chevalier De Drucour the charges against him.

But the crisis was at hand at last.

Suddenly he heard the first mutterings of the storm from the outside.

The tumult which we have just described reached his ears, despite the stone walls of his cell, and he heard the voice of the captive on the other side.

"What is that?" came through the wall.

"I do not know," answered Capt. Lee. "Something is happening out there, for methinks I hear the hum of voices."

In a little while he heard more, as if the sounds had increased in volume and were nearer.

The Iroquois had nearly reached the bastion.

The artillery planted in the narrow street had been withdrawn before the rush of the painted warriors.

Flying Eagle and his braves had been stopped by the menace of the brass guns, but not for long.

They were at the bastion.

But ahead of them two figures had flitted, dressed also in the paraphernalia of the forest.

These were our friends, Straight Tongue and Surefoot, and they had reached the spot by a shorter cut.

Surefoot, who had, as he said, witnessed the rescue of Capt. Lee by St. Gerome's regiment, had followed the young Virginian to the very door of his bastille.

He knew where the young soldier was confined, had marked the spot well, and kept it in his mind.

But alone he was not able to rescue him, and his meeting with Straight Tongue gave him hope.

The two friends and companions knew that the savages would not be held long in check by the menace of the guns, but they hoped that it would be long enough to enable them to carry out their plans.

The soldier on guard at the bastion presented his bayonet at sight of the supposed Indians, but Straight Tongue brushed it aside.

"We want to save the commandant's prisoner!" cried he. "We want the key to the dungeon!"

The sentry shook his head.

"What! you have no key?"

"I have none. It is held by Lieut. Sapante."

"Where is he?"

"Yonder," and the Frenchman pointed away.

"We can't find him. The reds are behind us. They will batter down the door."

"There is a hole in the roof."

"In the roof of the dungeon?"

"Yes."

They rushed into the bastion proper.

A flight of seven steps led to a room over the cell, and Straight Tongue, throwing himself against the door that barred their progress, dashed headlong into a little chamber.

In the floor at his feet was an iron ring, and the old man seized it with a strength born of eagerness and despair.

Surefoot aided him, and they lifted the covering from its rusty casing.

"Cap'n!" cried Straight Tongue, as he leaned over the cavernous opening.

"Here!" came from below.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Straight Tongue.
"This way, cap'n."

Some one appeared in the dim light which had fallen into the place.

"Put up your hands, cap'n," said the old forester, and the next moment Straight Tongue was pulling Capt. George from the pit.

As the young guardsman reached the top he looked in a bewildered manner at his rescuers, and cried out:

"What! has the fortress fallen?"

"Not by a long shot," was the reply. "The Indians, drunk with vengeance, want you."

The three drew back and listened.

Outside the bastion they heard the red horde at the door of the empty cell.

The tumult was like the breaking of the sea upon a rocky shore.

Straight Tongue stood like a statue for a minute, and then sprang to the little door.

"No use to barricade that," he said, after a glance. "I fixed the door when I broke it down."

Lee drew his sword, and his lips met as he made ready for the fight for life.

"Listen to the red devils," said Surefoot, with a grim smile. "I never heard such a set o' wolves before."

"Nor I. They have broken over every restraint, and Drucour can't stop 'em."

"At least," said Lee, "we can die here."

"I'm not thinkin' o' dyin' at the hands of a pack like that," was the reply. "Come."

They passed through the door, and stopped for a moment.

"They're in the cell," said Surefoot. "An' they've found it empty!"

This was true. The red beasts had broken in the door of the dungeon and had learned that the bird had flown.

"What comes next—a fight?" said Lee.

"I don't know. There is no one at the foot of the stair. Let us reconnoiter."

They glided noiselessly down the little flight, and saw that the savages were in front of the cell, gesticulating wildly at the loss of their prey.

"This way. They'll not assault the governor's house," cried Surefoot.

The three slipped out into the darkness, and turned to the right.

At the end of the dauphin's bastion stood the house of the commandant.

It was a large, stone affair, built for the governor, and strong enough to withstand a siege of itself.

They ran across the place unseen by the preoccupied savages, and into the cramped court.

The guards there had been doubled, but Straight Tongue brushed the lowered muskets aside and all dashed on.

In a moment they had passed the outer threshold.

Bursting into the audience room, they presented themselves to Drucour, who, white-faced, had drawn his sword, alarmed at the commotion beyond the door, but when he saw Straight Tongue he lowered it.

As he did so the door behind him opened and

Madame Drucour appeared with Amy and Joanna behind her.

"We sent for the demoiselles in order to save them from the vengeance of the Indians," said the governor.

"That is right, but the Indians may come here when they discover that we have saved the cap'n."

Even while Straight Tongue spoke an officer flung wide the door and paused at the sight before him.

"What is it, Dumas?" asked Drucour.

"The Indians are coming to attack the house!"

"Where is St. Gerome?"

"I do not know, your excellency. The Indians found the bastion cell empty, and will soon be here."

Drucour flushed scarlet.

"What sort of men do I command?" he cried. "Must I depend for help on my enemies alone?"

Dumas drew his sword and planted himself at the door.

"You can at least depend upon Andre Dumas, soldier of the king," he said.

The little room was nearly taken up by those in it, and all waited for the savages.

At the end of ten minutes the first sounds of the scarlet mob reached their ears. It was like the distant roar of a storm, then it broke suddenly over their heads, and all looked at the barricaded portal.

"Take down the barricades," commanded Drucour, white with passion.

"But, your excellency——"

"Take them down! No soldier of France will ever barricade himself against a lot of Indians. Down, Dumas!"

The young officer and Straight Tongue removed the barricade and fell back.

"Ladies to the rear," said the governor, with a glance at madame and her charges.

"We share your fate," replied his wife. "See! We are armed, and can shoot."

Each of the women held pistols in their hands, and Joanna thought of her shot at Red Fox while she waited for the last assault.

For a moment the storm seemed to recede, then to become silent altogether, then it spurted out again, and a yell that seemed to shake every rafter in the house broke upon their ears.

"Ready, gentlemen," said Drucour, quietly. "Let the first have it squarely in their faces!"

The tumult outside increased, there were footsteps and cries just beyond the door, and some one suddenly pushed it open.

On the other side of the threshold was a sea of painted faces, ochered and vermilioned, and interspersed throughout them all the eyes of more than savages—eyes of fiends incarnate.

"Fire!" rang out the voice of Chevalier De Drucour.

The reports of the weapons in the hands of the seven seemed to blend into one, and there were cries of pain beyond the door.

The mob recoiled.

Their pistols emptied, the defenders flashed their swords and placed themselves on the defensive.

Half a dozen bodies blocked the head of the little flight of steps.

"Forward!" shouted Drucour.

Capt. Lee, sword in hand, leaped at the writhing figures still in sight, but he did not reach one.

The mob had turned.

The Indians were going down the steps pell-mell, uttering cries of fright.

Out into the night they rushed, to be met by a line of bayonets in the hands of St. Gerome's grenadiers.

Flying Eagle recoiled, and turned away, but the same sight met his gaze whichever way he looked.

He and his band were inside of a square of steel, and upon the countenance of the grizzled colonel was a merciless look.

But St. Gerome spared. He pressed the Indians into a group in the middle of the square. The gleaming steel almost touched their half-naked bodies, and then he waited for orders.

Drucour came running out, and took in the situation at a glance.

"Let the devils go," he said to St. Gerome. "Some other time we will settle with them all."

Flying Eagle threw a contemptuous look toward the French commandant and lifted his hand.

"We will go over to the English!" he cried.

"The English don't want you!" exclaimed Straight Tongue. "They have red dogs enough now barking at their heels."

"We will no longer serve the king who protects his foes," continued Flying Eagle. "We will kill every Frenchman we meet."

"Then you can begin now," shouted Drucour, as he went straight at Iroquois with his blade.

But madame sprang forward and seized her husband's sword-arm, for in another instant he would have stretched the war chief of the Iroquois dead at his feet.

Sullenly the scarlet wolves of the forest withdrew.

St. Gerome's men lowered their weapons and saw the Indians march away.

"Gentlemen," said Drucour, as he turned upon our three friends, "I regret this happened so quietly."

Quietly? They wondered what a tumult was in his estimation.

They went back into the house, and madame brought out wine. They filled the goblets, and the commandant raised his to his lips.

"To the king of France," cried he. "You will not refuse to drink to Louis just this once, gentlemen?"

"To the king of France," repeated Capt. Lee. "May he ever have a defender like the Chevalier De Dru-cour!"

The toast over, the two young ladies came in, and Joanna was embraced by her father.

"How is Vernon?" she asked, as she turned to Capt. Lee.

"He is in the English camp. Had he been permitted to come hither he would have been here."

Joanna flushed and looked away, and just then the roar of a single gun broke the stillness.

The commandant looked startled. He knew what it meant.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN ROYAL GEORGE WON THE DAY.

"Gentlemen, we will go now," said Drucour. "The way back to the British camp is open to you all."

"But I have not answered to you for the death of Red Fox," answered Capt. Lee.

"You, sir?" was the reply. "You need not answer for that from what I have lately heard. This young lady"—and he turned to Joanna—"is the one whom we must thank for that—she and the red rival."

"What, you, Joanna?" cried Lee.

"My father taught me to protect myself, and I did so. It was our lives or the chief's, and I fired straight at his head."

"I thank you in the name of France, young lady," said Drucour. "When this unhappy war is over I will see that my king rewards you. It was a shot worth a thousand, for that red fiend has devastated the frontiers from the great gulf to the lakes."

Half an hour later the dauphin's gate opened for five persons, and Drucour removed his hat as Capt. Lee bade him farewell.

The siege of Louisbourg had opened, for the gun heard by the company in the governor's house was Wolfe's first compliments of his king.

In returning to the British camp, the five were compelled to pass many soldiers, who stopped in their work of planting the siege guns to look at them.

"Bless me, if there isn't the fellow Amherst sentenced to be cashiered for——"

"Not so fast," was the interruption. "Don't you know the rumor now in camp—that Capt. Lee was only playing a part for the general? He's going back now."

Amherst stood at his camp table when the flap of his tent was lifted, and the young guardsman appeared before him.

"You?" cried the astonished general. "You come back from the dead, Capt. Lee."

"From the jaws of death at least," was the reply.

"You must have escaped."

"I was bidden *bon voyage* by Drucour himself. He accompanied me to the dauphin's gate, and let us all go."

"What has taken possession of Drucour?" cried Amherst.

"The Frenchman is a gentleman," said Capt. Lee, with a show of spirit. "You have a brave enemy in Louisbourg, Gen. Amherst."

"Come, tell me all, sir," said the general. "How many guns, and where are they?"

A look of indignation came into Lee's eyes.

"Gen. Amherst," said he, quietly, "there were many things I did not see."

"But I sent you to Louisbourg with your eyes open."

"You sent me into the jaws of death after disgracing me in the eyes of the army——"

"None of this," broke in Amherst. "You are a soldier of the king, and, as such, must obey."

"The king would not have sent me. The king of England, whom I have the honor to serve, has a more humane heart than has some of those who command under him."

Amherst bit his lip and looked down.

"You will publish the truth to the regiments to-morrow," cried Lee. "You must reinstate me in the minds of the army."

"If I desire to I will, sir."

Lee impulsively laid his hand on his sword.

"You are my superior officer," he said, "but that does not prevent me from seeking my rights at your hands."

"What ails thee, young sir?" cried Amherst. "By my soul! you must have learned some things in the French camp."

"I have learned that Frenchmen can be gentlemen," was the reply.

"By my life, sir, I'll have you cashiered for certain," almost roared the red-faced general. "I will not per-

mit a Virginian to insult me. You must have learned some of your impudence from your Col. Washington."

"Who has a loftier soul than will ever beat in the bosom of Gen. Jeffrys Amherst!"

The general fairly stamped the floor in his rage.

He was in the act of again venting his spleen upon Capt. Lee when Wolfe made his appearance.

"Welcome back, Capt. Lee," cried the young general. "We shall fight the enemy together now. We will enter old Louisbourg side by side, and I shall ask Gen. Amherst to have the Young Guards placed in my command."

"I will reflect upon that request, Gen. Wolfe."

"Reflect!" cried the impetuous Wolfe, whirling upon Amherst. "I demand it, sir. Capt. Lee must be reinstated at once, and the whole army told of his daring in entering the fortress for the king. Remember your promise, Gen. Amherst. You must keep it, or lose the services of James Wolfe!"

Amherst's brow darkened, and he looked askance with a frown.

"We might as well have the paper now," continued Wolfe. "You have some time on your hands, general. Draw up the paper which explains Capt. Lee's trial and absence. He is going to his company, the Young Guards, right off, and he wants to show it to the lads."

In vain did the slippery Amherst attempt to get out

of the task, but Wolfe held him closely to it, and in a few minutes Capt. Lee had the document in his hands.

As he passed out of the tent, he felt a pair of arms thrown round his neck, and he looked up into the face of Wolfe.

"I ask nothing better than we be comrades, Capt. Lee," said the young Briton. "I already admire your bravery, and I would have resented your treatment by Gen. Amherst had you fallen in this perilous venture. Shall we not be comrades?"

"Always, general," was Lee's reply. "I shall ask nothing better, sir, than to be permitted to fight at your side."

"Your desire shall be granted. I will see to that."

Lee's reception among the Young Guards was enthusiastic in the extreme.

It did not require the paper to reinstate him in the confidence of the little command.

They had never believed him guilty of the charges preferred against him, nor had the bulk of the army, but, if the matter had been left to the cold-blooded Amherst, he would never have been exonerated.

The two girls found a resting place on board one of the vessels, while Straight Tongue and Surefoot doffed their Indian dress and resumed their places in the army.

The siege of Louisbourg, which had just opened in earnest, progressed day and night.

Wolfe, who had main charge of operations, drew

his parallels closer and closer, planting his siege guns in the face of the enemy.

Nimble Ned rejoiced at Capt. Lee's safe return, and lent his aid in every movement.

He had something to tell Capt. Lee upon that soldier's return from the bastion cell.

Dick Parsons, whom he had caught in the act of overhearing the proceedings of a council of war, and whom he had turned over to Gen. Amherst, had effected his escape.

"It was Amherst's fault," said Ned. "Why he didn't hang the spy at once I cannot say. Dick vanished, and I hunted for him, but he got clean off. I think we shall see more of him one of these days."

"Quite likely, for he is the sort of villain who turns up unexpectedly."

"Had I known that Amherst was going to dilly-dally with Dick, I would have paid off the old score myself," answered Ned. "He is probably now with Drucour, who, no doubt, he furnished with lots of information, but when we take the fortress, my word for it, Dick won't be among the prisoners of war."

Shot and shell poured into doomed Louisbourg day by day.

It was a storm of lead and iron, and the roar of the great guns drowned the thunder of the surf.

Some of the houses inside the fort were set afire,

and some of the shipping in the harbor destroyed by the red-hot balls which Amherst threw from his cannon.

One night six hundred French made a sally through the dauphin's gate.

They were led by St. Gerome, and came plunging down upon the English in their entrenchments with the thunder of a storm.

It was a surprise for the British.

"Form! Form!" rang through the camp, and the Young Guards, upon whom the assault first fell, recoiled for a time.

But Capt. Lee and Vernon, rushing among them, lined them up like veterans, and they met the Frenchies with the bayonet.

Back and forth rolled the tide of battle under the canopy of stars.

The Guards were driven into a natural *cul de sac*, and for a moment it seemed as if annihilation awaited them.

"Charge!" shouted Lee. He threw himself for the fifth time at the head of the Guards, and led them against the enemy.

Just then, down upon the whitecoats, dashed a battalion led by Wolfe in person, and the grenadiers fell back, stubbornly contesting every foot of ground.

It proved the hottest battle before the walls, and the Young Guardsmen drew from Amherst praise which he was loath to bestow.

As the days wore on, the fire of the mortars and siege guns upon Louisbourg became terrific.

The bastions were battered in many places, but still the intrepid Drucour held out.

Like a lion at bay, he upheld the cause of his king in North America, and, sustained by his heroic wife, he battled on and on, even after he knew there was no hope.

"Some one to see you," said Vernon, to Capt. Lee, one day in the midst of the siege.

Capt. Lee walked down the line, and found a young man awaiting him.

He was a Frenchman who had been captured in a sally by the redcoats, and, bowing, he presented a sealed note to the young captain of the Guards.

Lee opened it with some curiosity, for the superscription was in a woman's handwriting, and when he saw the crest of Drucour he was more than ever amazed.

It was a letter from madame, who said that she sent it by the young officer, who, in case of capture, had promised to convey it to him, and she sent her compliments and best wishes to himself, and Amy, and Joanna.

It was one of the flowers that sometimes bloom on the fields of war.

At last the day of doom came.

Battered and torn, the walls of Louisbourg lay at the mercy of the foe.

The *fleur de lys* of Louis had been repeatedly shot from its staff, twice to be replaced by the hands of Capt. Bavoire, and the buildings of the town had crumbled before the fire of the British.

So fast had the bombs fallen within the inclosure that the surgeons at their bloody work had to duck their heads and cry out: "*Gare le bomb!*" every few seconds.

Drucour had defended his post to the bitter end.

Louis never had a braver soldier in North America than this chevalier of the far north.

On the 26th of July, 1758, the garrison surrendered with the honors of war; five thousand men fell into the hands of the victors, hundreds of cannon and tons of powder and ball. The bastions had been shot to pieces, a bomb had burst in Capt. Lee's prison, and another had terminated the career of the forest scourge, Flying Eagle.

France had lost her strongest fort in that part of the world, but there yet remained Quebec to be immortalized by the deeds of Wolfe.

Leaving a strong guard in the fortress, which was barely tenable, Amherst and Boscawen turned away to other scenes.

They were officially recognized for their victory, but everyone regarded Wolfe as the hero of the siege.

He had performed prodigies of valor, giving promise of that future glory which he was to achieve on the Heights of Abraham.

The leader of the Young Guardsmen prepared to separate from Amherst and take his little command back to Col. Washington.

Not long afterward the young guardsman appeared in Winchester, where he was greeted by Washington, who listened to the story of the siege and capture of the fortress by the sea. Vernon and Mason had their stories to tell to admiring listeners, and Nimble Ned never failed of an appreciative audience.

Amy and Joanna went back to old Williamsburg, where they were admired and feted in a fashion that stirred their hearts.

After the troublous times through which they had passed, they were glad to dismiss all thought of war and enjoy the peace they had earned.


With Col. Washington's warm words of commendation ringing in the young guardsman's ears, we bid farewell to our friends.

THE END.

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